THE CHRISTIAN COMPANION.



And when he had Spoken thefe things, hewns taken up and a doud received him, v. 9. And while they looked stedfastly towards heaven, behold two men in white, & O. Acts Chap. 1. V. 10.

Printed for J. Hooke, Bo.

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THE

Christian's Companion,

INTHE

PRINCIPLES of RELIGION,

Concerns of Human LIFE.

OR, THE

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OF THE

Christian Religion.

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What are those THINGS Necessary to be Known, Believed, and Practifed, for the Attainment of Everlasting SALVATION.

In FOUR PARTS.

To which is Annexed,
The TERMS of our SALVATION, &c.

How sweet are thy WORDS unto my Taste! yea, sweeter than Honey to my Mouth, Psalm cxix. 103.

LONDON: Printed for J. HOOKE, at the Flower-de-luce, against St. Dunstan's Church in Floetstreet. MDCCXVI.

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PREFACE.

I

Wonder, that in an Age, wherein Men so much study to excell in all ingenious Arts and Sciences,

there should be so little Appearance of the bright Ornaments of the Christian Spirit. It is a known Saying of PLATO, That if Virtue could be made visible to the Eyes of Men, the Loveliness of it would soon gain it a world of Admirers: With how much more Reason may we affirm this of the Doctrine of our Blessed LORD, that Wisdom which is truly Divine, and full of Grace and Love? This it was which

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The PREFACE.

as its first Appearance in the World, caused it to be imbraced and espoused, when it had no other Portion but the bitterest Sufferings and Persecutions to recommend it. Whence now comes it to paß, that in Countries where it is Established and openly Professed, it is so strangely slighted and undervalued? Is it because it is less lovely in it felf Now, than it was in its Tender Years? No. furely; it hath, and ever will have the same immortal Beauty and Perfections. But it rarely appears in its proper Habit and Figure: It is, to speak plainly, but seldom represented to Advantage in the Life and Manners of its Professors, which is the only Way to make it visible. And no other Reason can be assign'd, why it sould not have as powerful an Influence upon Men's Lives now as formerly, but because they do not so thoroughly apprehend its Design; they are not so well grounded in the Principles of it. Tet fure there are not wanting Labourers in Christ's Vineyard, who diligently cultivate and dress it, and study to make Men fruitful in the Work of their Lord. But alas! Preaching is applauded with us to no better Purpose, than it was in the Time of the Prophet EZEKIEL, whose Discourses to his People.

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The PREFACE

were as a very lovely Song of one that had a pleasant Voice: They were Admirers of his Rhetorick and Oratory, but no diligent Learners of the Things he taught them.

AS to what is here offer'd, I have endeavour'd to give you a compendious System of all the momentous Doctrines of Christianity, not only shewing their Foundation in Holy Scripture, but likewise studying to express that plain and perspicuous Phrase, in which they were first deliver'd, whereby the most sublime Things are brought down to our Understandings in the most Easie and Condescending Terms.

AND tho' there is great Variety of Religious Books amongst us, yet that doth not render farther Attempts in this kind Unnecessary; since several Men writing upon the same Subject, treat it in a different Way, and so have every one their particular and necessary Uses. However, I presume, the Reader will find most of the Subjects here treated of, so distinct, as not to interfere with former Treatises of the like Design.

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Eyek. xxxiii. 32.

The PREFACE

WHOEVER hopes for Salvation upon Rational Grounds, must one Time or other, become a Christian in good Earnest; that is, must study both to know his LORD's Will, and to do it. For by this Rule he hath affur'd us He will proceed, when he comes to be our Judge. The Word that I have fpoken unto you, the same shall judge you at the Last Day. 2 What a deplarable Condition then will those he in, who do not so much as once set themselves seriously to inquire into the State of their Souls? Will their affected Ignorance be allow'd as a sufficient Plea for their Neglects? Will the Affairs and Bufiness of this Life, excuse them for not having minded the Concerns of a Better? So far from that, that a Condemnatory Sentence is already passed upon them. in the Case of the foolish Virgins, who being to seek Oyl for their Lamps, when they should have met their Lord, were thereupon rejected, and for ever fbut out of his Prefence.

EVERY wife Man therefore will be daily improving that Talent of Knowledge, which his LORD hath committed to him, by making the

The PREFACE.

best Use of good Books, and all other Opportunities afforded him for that Purpose. For these will be put upon his Account, whether he uses them or not. And therefore the Holy Scripture justly characterizes him for a Fool, who hath a Price in his Hand to get Wisdom, but hath no Heart to it.

AND he will not only make the best Use of such Helps himself, but he will take Care that others may do so too. Goodness (especially that which is truly Christian) is always Communicative. It is a Piece of Cruelty to suffer the Blind to mistake his Way; 'tis Inhuman to permit any Calamity to befal your Neighbour, when it is in your Power to prevent it. But it is Diabolical, the Sport and Pleasure of Devils, to let a Man perish for Want of Knowledge, and precipitate himself into the Pit of Destruction. On the other Hand, it is Divinely Good, I had almost said Meritorious, to be the Soul's Benefactor, and Guide to Eternal Glory. Great are the Rewards which are promised to such. Brethren, says St. James,

^{*} Prov. Kvii. 16.

The PREFACE.

If any of you do erre from the Truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth a Sinner from the Error of his Way, shall saye a Soul from Death, and shall hide a Multitude of Sins. And They. feys Daniel, b that turn many to Righteoufness, shall shine as the Stars in the Firmament for ever and ever. That I may be found in the Number of such, is the Sum of my Wifbes. and the End of my Labours.

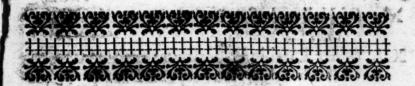
a James v. ult. b Dan. xii. 13

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INTRODUCTION.

HE whole Sum of Man's Duty

being comprehended in these two Things, the Knowledge and the Practice of it, it is indispensably necessary, in order to attain to that Holiness without which no Man shall see God, to be endued with fuch a competent Knowledge of our Duty, as to be holy in all manner of Conversation. For then are we truly religious, when, understanding the Things which are requisite to be believed in order to Salvation, we act according to that Understanding. If either of these be wanting, it is impossible to serve God in an acceptable manner. For the want of being throughly inftructed in the Grounds and Principles of Religion, is the main Gause that the Generality of Mankind lead fuch ill Lives. Many good Sermons are preach'd, and Books publish'd

to promote Piety in the World. But as a

Lecture

Lecture (however Learned and Rational) in any Art or Science, is not to be understood by a Man who is not first made acquainted with the general System of such Science, so Sermons and other excellent Discourses are but lost to abundance of Men, for want of being before-hand carefully grounded in those fundamental Principles which all Christians ought to know, and do generally agree in.

Our Religion is styled by the Apostle, (a) our reasonable Service. But how can it deserve that Appellation, if the Understanding, which is the Ground-work of Reason, be not duly inform'd? What Value, think we, will God put upon that Action, tho' it be never so good and pious for the matter of it, which is done ignorantly, and without the Direction of a sound Understanding? The holy Scripture tells us, (b) He that walketh in Darkness, knoweth not whither be goeth, and consequently must needs stray into every By-Path, and be ready to embrace any wild Opinion that shall be insused into him.

THE Want of divine Knowledge, hinders Men from a due Sense of the Things of God, the Excellency of Grace, and the Beauty of Holiness. 'Tis an old and true Maxim, That what is not known, cannot be desir'd and lov'd; and therefore it is necessary in order to the desiring and loving of any thing, that

know what real Worth there is in Virtue, and how base and vile every Sin is, they would greatly prize the former, and as much abhor the latter. Did they but clearly discern the Lustre of Heavenly Things, how would they admire them! Indeed there is nothing wanting to make us heartily in love with our holy Religion, but a full Insight into all the Excellencies of it: For this is most certain, that none ever yet condemn'd it, who well understood it; but on the contrary, the more any Man has known of it, the more firmly he has embrac'd it.

St. Austin says very well, Men must needs live ill, if their Belief concerning God be not right. Their Morals cannot but be corrupt, when their Principles are unfound. A religious and holy Conversation is the genuine Result and Product of right Apprehensions of God, and his Laws. He that knows not God, nor what he requires Men to do, is prepar'd to commit all manner of Impiety. Of such St. Paul speaks, (a) The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels in slaming sire, taking Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be panished with everlasting Destraction from the Presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power. Here we see, that

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⁽ii) 2 Thef. 1. 7. 8.

knowing hot God, as well as not obeying him when known, incurrs the Pains of everlafting Damnation. If we know not God in this Life, we must not expect to be known and own'd of him when he comes to judge the World; but to hear those Worlds from him: Depart

from me, I know you not!

It is a Doctrine clearly taught and established in the Holy Scriptures, that gross and wilful Ignorance is a damning Sin. The Israelites offer'd Sacrifices for Sins of Ignorance (4). Their Ancestors in the Wilderness, God calls, a People that erred in their Heart, and had not known his Ways: unto whom he sware in his Wrath, that they should not enter into his Rest. St. Paul admonishes the Ephesians, (b) Not to walk as other Gentiles, having the Understanding dirkned; being alienated from the Life of God, through the Ignorance that is in them, because of the Blindness (or Hardness) of their Hearts.

AND it is an undoubted Truth, that the Knowledge of spiritual and divine Matters far excells all other Knowledge, according to that certain Rule, That the more excellent the Object is, the more excellent is the Knowledge of it. Therefore says Solomon (c) of this kind of Knowledge: Happy is the Man that sindeth Wisdom, and the Man that getteth Understanding. For the Merchandise of it is better than Silver, and the Gain thereof than sine Gold.

⁽a) Numb. 15. 24, 25. (b) Cb. 4. v. 17. (c) Prov. 3. 13, 14.

This is Life eternal, says our Lord (a), to know thee the only true God, and JESUS CHRIST whom thou hast sent. I determined to know nothing among you, says St. Paul (b), save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

THERE may indeed be a Zeal for God without Knowledge, but it commonly does a great deal of Mischief; there may be good Qualities found in an unregenerate Man, but they cannot proceed from a good Principle, they are either the Result of natural Temper and Complexion, or are taken up with a Design to impose upon the World for the sake of Interest or Advancement, and are alter'd or laid aside when there is no such Occasion for them.

But the Scriptures are able to make us wife unto Salvation; in them our Lord commands us to fearch for eternal Life; they are called, A Light unto our Feet, and a Lamp unto our Paths. To the Law, and to the Testimony, says Isaiah (c), if they speak not according to this Rule, it is because there is no Light in them. Reading and hearing the Word of God, or such pious Discourses as are well grounded upon it, will instruct all States and Conditions of Men, not only how to worship God, but how to behave themselves in the World one towards another, how to conduct themselves amidst the various Temptations of the World,

⁽⁴⁾ John 17. 3. (b) 1 Cor. 2. 2. (c) Chap. 8, v. 20.

B 3 and

and guard against the subtle Infinuations of such as lie in wait to deceive.

ONE may observe in a fine Garden (where due Skill and Care is used) the great Improvements in Plants and Flowers, beyond what otherwise would have been; which leads us into a Reflection upon the Advantages of a Religious Education: How many good Ornaments and Improvements of the Mind are loft for want of the like due Care in nursing and skilfully managing it; how many Virtues are choak'd by the vicious Weeds which are fuffer'd to grow among them; and how very feldom the good Seed produces fuch excellent Fruit as might be expected from it, through a Neglect of proper manuring, necessary pruning, and a skilful Management of our tender Inclinations, and first Notions of Things. As foon may Gardens produce the well pleasing Seeds, Fruits, or Plants, without Culture or Dressing; as Youth without Education be creditable or advantagious to Church or State. The Mind of Man, is at first like Wax, which while it is foft, is capable of any Impression, till Time has harden'd it.

This improveable Faculty, looks like a vegetable Principle in the Mind of Man. While he is an Infant, the Seeds lie buried and undifcover'd, till after some Years they sprout forth in a kind of rational Leaves, which are Words; and in due Season, the Flowers

Flowers begin to appear in variety of beautiful Colours, and all the gay Pictures of youthful Fancy and Imagination: At last the Fruit knits and is form'd, which when green, is perhaps four and unpleasant to the Taste; till ripen'd by due Care and Application, it difcovers it felf in all the noble Productions of Wifdom, good Elocution, close Reasoning, and a thousand Graces and Virtues. And these Fruits, when they arrive at a just Maturity, and are of a good kind, afford the most vigorous Nourishment to the Minds of Men, and will cause them to lead a wise and virtuous Course of Life, to pursue those Things that are praise worthy, and to understand the World so well, as to avoid many of the cross Accidents and Misfortunes of it.

Just Notions will into good Actions grow, And to our Reason we our Virtues owe. False Judgments are the unhappy Source of ill, And blinded Error draws the passive Will. To know our God, and know our Selves, is all We can True Happiness or Wisdom call. ENTROOPED WE WATE

Howers begin to appear in variety of beautiful, Colours, and all the gay Pichines of Yorus ut Ranty and Imagination: At isft the Franc lenies and is formed, which when green, is perhaps four and unploafant to the Taffe; till ripen'd by due Care and Mandearion, it'dilcovers to felf in all the noble Productions of Not om, good Bloomien, close it cloning, and a river and Graces and Virgues and their Front when they arrive and which attrices and sies of a good londy single the seas force gorous Moundantens to the Merids of Men. and will canfe them to led a wifered vitthous Courie of I de to parkin thole I hinds than so praife worthy, said to probritard the close on to query blockers in the of block all all be anomalistic ban are shoot

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Being and Attributes.

PART I. CHAP. I.



HE first Point of Religion that we are taught in the Holy Scriptures, is, That there is a GOD. This is made the first Thing to be known, because the Scripture saith (a), He that

cometh to God, must believe that He is. And that there is a God, we have, besides, the infinite Testimonies of the Scriptures, the common Consent of all Nations, approving of this Truth; who rather worship any God or Gods, than none at all.

THE Evidence of an Almighty God is fo clear and plain to our own Conceptions, that our Reason alone is abundantly sufficient to convince us of the Truth of his Being, tho' God had not made it further known to us by Revelation. For what is more evident to our natural Reason, than that there must be some first Principle of Being, from whence all other Beings proceed? What should be the Cause, or who should be the Maker of Man? We find nothing in Nature able to undertake fuch a Piece of Workmanship. It has never been heard that Men have been produc'd in any other. than the ordinary Way and Course of Nature; and the same may be said of Beasts. There is no Historian above 4000 Years old, (Moses's facred History excepted, as being the most ancient in the World); there are scarce any of the Arts and Sciences, fcarce a Kingdom or City, the Original of which we do not know. Our own Reason informs us, That the World was made and framed by an omnipotent God, because we see so much Order, Beauty, and Usefulness in the whole and every part of it, produced from one confused Chaos of Earth and Water, cover'd over with universal Darkness, void and without Form; which is not only recorded in Holy Writ to be the Original of this World, but is likewise attested by divers ancient Heathen Philosophers. And indeed indeed, nothing can be more abfurd than to imagine that the World could be made by the Creatures that are in it, or that it could make it felf, or that Chance should be the Cause of all Things. As little Reason have we to ascribe the Preservation and Government of it to any other Power but that of God. Our constant Experience teaches us, that without his wife and merciful Ordering of the Seafons and Elements, the Earth would not be in a Condition to yield its Increase. At his Word the Rain cometh down, and the Snow from Heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the Earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give Seed to the Sower, and Bread to the Eater. Thus Elijah pray'd to God that it might not rain, and it rained not for the Space of three Years and fix Months: And he pray'd again, and the Heavens gave Rain, and the Barth brought forth its Fruit. What a plain Demonstration is this alone, that there is a God in Heaven that fends down the Rain and Dew to water the Earth, that it may bring forth its Fruits for the Nourishment of our Bodies? So that we are fensible we cannot enjoy a Moment's Breath without his good Pleafure.

A farther Evidence of the Being of God, is what we find within us. Our Consciences, upon the Commission of any great Sin, perplex us with Fears that we shall sometime

be call'd to an Account by an all-powerful and impartial Judge, who knows the Hearts of all Men, and will render to every Man according to his Works.) This makes the floutest Sinner often tremble at the Remembrance of his heinous Offences, however fecure he is that they are conceal'd from the Knowledge of the World, and that no human Laws can punish him for them. His outward Security can never deliver him from the clamorous Accusations of his Conscience, which testifies against him wherever he goes. This is a strong Argument that there is a God of infinite Justice. before whose Tribunal he must one Day appear, and answer for what ever he hath done smifs and Bread to the Renew I tree Same

Moreover, all Things round the World. evidently shew the Finger of God, and declare to us that Beauty and Order wherein they were created. Thus we may observe the glorious Splendor and uniform Motion of the Heavens above, where our Eves behold those bright celestial Bodies, the Sun to rule the Day, and the Moon and Stars by Night to give Light to the Earth. The pleasant Fertility of the Earth, in supporting and feeding such great Variety and infinite Numbers of Plants and Animals: where we may view the curious Figure and fragrant Sweetness of the one, and the exquisite Structure of the other. The Waters gather'd together in their proper Channels, nourishing innumerable Multitudes of various kinds of Fishes.

Fishes. The ambient Air for every winged Fowl to fly in; and all other amazing Miracles of Nature, wherein the glorious Attributes and infinite Goodness of God, are most con-

fpicuoufly difplay'd.

ANOTHER Argument for the Divine Being. is from the Holy Scriptures, which do more immediately ascribe unto God the Father, the first Person in the blessed Trinity, the Work of creating the World, and the governing and ordering of it by his good Providence. (a) Before the Mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadft form'd the Earth, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. (b) Thou, even thou art Lord alone, thou haft made the Heaven of Heavens with all their Hoft, the Earth and all things that are therein, the Seas and all that is therein. (6) Thus faith the Lord of Hofts, I have made the Earth, the Man and the Beafts that are upon the Ground, by my great Power and by my firetched-out Arm, and have given it to whom it seemed meet unto me. (d) Blessed be the Name of God for ever and ever; for Wildom and Might are his, and he changeth the Times and Seasons; he removeth Kings and festeth up Kings. (e) By me Kings rule and Princes decree Justice. By me Princes rule, and Nobles, yea, all the Judges of the Earth.

St. Paul teaches us (f) to contemplate the Divine Majesty in the Works of Creation. For

⁽a) Pfal. 90. 2. (b) Neb. 9. 2. (c) Fer. 27. 9. (d) Dan. 2.

their

the invisible Things of him from the Creation of the World, are clearly feen, being understood by the Thines that are made. God worketh by Angels, by the Sun, by the Stars, by Nature and by Man. all these being the Second Causes, which are as it were the Conduits and Pipes, which carry and dispose what they have received from the Head and Fountain of all Things. God gives Power to the Sun to draw up Vapours, he turns the Vapours into Clouds, he featters the Clouds abroad with the Wind. and makes them fall in Drops of Rain. He makes the Air we breathe, and the Food we eat, wholesome and nourishing to us, and all our Herbs and Medicines for Diftempers and Wounds, derive their healing Virtue from him.

This good Use should we make of those Things which are before us, to acknowledge the great Creator in them, and to glorifie him for them. By these visible Things, we are brought to perceive so much of the invisible Majesty of God, as may convince us of our Duty to confess, honour and worship him. But we must not attempt, by any Observations we can make in Heaven or Earth, to pry into God's fecret Counfels, and examine his hidden Decrees, which are as far above our Reach, as Heaven is above this Earth. This part of Wisdom we may learn from the brute Creatures: We observe they have an Instinct sufficient to guide them to chuse

their Food, and do those Things which are necessary to preserve them, and render them ferviceable to Mankind; and farther than this they aspire not. Making of Laws, governing Kingdoms, managing Commerce and Trade, practifing and improving Arts and Sciences, is what they have no Notion of, nor, any Faculties fuited to attain; and therefore they are not concern'd about them. By the fame Rule flould we conclude, that there are many Things the proper Objects of divine Wildom, which are far above, out of our Sight, which we are no more capable of knowing, than the Beafts can know our Affairs; fince God excells us far more than we dothe meaneft Creature upon Barth.

fume too far, in prying into Things above us which don't concern us. He smote the Men of Bethshemesh with a very great Slaughter, for looking into the Ark, (a). He reproved Job for taking upon him too freely to censure the Divine Conduct; and his Holy Word affords several Admonitions to this Purpose: (b) What Man knoweth the Things of Man, save the Spirit of a Man which is within him? Even so, how can one know the Things of God, unless the Spirit of God reveal them? (c) His Way is in the Sea, and his Path in the deep Waters, and his Footsteps are not known. (d) Secret Things

⁽a) 1 Sam. 6. 19. (b) 1 Cor. 2.11. (c) Pf. 77. 19.
(d) Deut. 29. 29.

belong unto the Lord our God; but those Things which are revealed, belong unto us and to our Children. (a) O the Depth of the Riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past

finding out!

THE Being of this God whom we worship, is so little to be doubted, that it is almost the only Truth we are fure of; it is a Truth that we meet with in almost every Object and Occurrence of Life. Therefore we may with Astonishment wonder, that it's possible there should be such a Monster in Being as an Atheist or Deift; when if he would but confider (as he must needs know) that it is impossible for Man, or any other Creature to give Life to another; this would naturally lead him at last to the Confession of a God. Let him but reflect on God's wonderful Dealings with Mankind in Ages past, such as the Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah by Fire and Brimstone from Heaven, and that of the whole World by a Deluge of Waters; the dividing of the Red Sea for the Ifraelites to pass through on dry Land; the Sun's standing still at the Prayer of Josbua, and going backward at the Recovery of Hezekiah; the Preservation of the three Men in the fiery Furnace; the Transformation of Nebuchadnezzar for his impious Pride); the Dispersion of their Po-

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⁽a) Romi 11. 33.

fferity who crucified the Son of God, who have now for above 1600 Years been banish'd from their own Country, having no particular Place belonging to them as a Nation; but are fcatter'd over all the Earth, have been often murther'd in great Multitudes, and yet are not quite extinct, nor yet fo mixt and blended with other Nations, but that they are still kept up a distinct People; as if they were intended for a lafting Monument to all the World of their grievous Sin in crucifying the Lord of Life, and the Vengeance of God which still pursues them for the same: Let, I fay, the most atheistical Person reflect on these things with that Regard which he would pay to any credible History, and he cannot but fee the Finger of God in them manifest beyond all Difpute or Contradiction.

THE ATTRIBUTES of GOD are, either such as peculiarly belong to his own Essence, as, Infiniteness, Immensity, Eternity, Omnipotence; or such as are communicable, whereof there are some Shadows and Traces in Angels and Men; as, Wisdom, Holiness, Ju-

flice, Mercy, Goodness.

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By his Infiniteness, God's Essence is signified to be without Measure or Quantity; and consequently his Substance, Power, Wisdom, and whatever is in the Divine Nature, is incomprehensible. By his Immensity, he containeth all things, is present every where, silling all Places, and at all Times with his Presence. By his Evernity, he is exempted from all Measure

fure of Time, and therefore is the First and the Last, without Beginning or End of Days. By his Omnipotence, he is Creator and Disposer of all things; by him they exist and are govern'd: He doth what soever pleaseth him in the Armies of Heaven and the Kingdoms of Men; and none can stay his Hand, or say unto him, What dost thou?

THOSE which we call Communicable Attributes, are so in Kind, but not in Degree, for in God they are all infinite. His Wisdom and Understanding is so great, that he knows all things, past, present, and to come, with all their Causes and Circumstances; even those things which to us feem to be cafual, and to fall out by chance. It extends to the most fecret and dark Corners of the World, to the very Thoughts and Intentions of the Heart. His Holiness is absolute Purity, not sullied with the least Appearance of Evil: For God is light, saith St. John, and in him is no Darkness at all. He hateth all Iniquity with a perfect Hatred: He cannot be tempted with Evil, faith St. James, neither tempteth he any Man. His Justice is most exact, not capable of being bribed by any Offerings or Prefents. He is a Rewarder of Good in whomsoever he finds it; but his Face is against them that do Evil. He will by no means clear the Guilty, but punishes Sin wherever he finds it; an unjust Sentence cannot proceed from him; he cannot err in Judgment. But above all, the Mercy of God is most conspicuous to us, exceeding the rest of the divine Attributes in the manifold

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manifold Acts and Instances of it. The Lord is good to all, fays David, and his tender Mercies are over all his Works. In him we live and move and have our Being. From him we derive all the Supports and Comforts of Life, which are the Effects, not of our Worthiness, but of his Compassion: For he delighteth to exercise loving Kindness, whereas Judgment is his ftrange Work, and he doth not willingly afflict the Sons of Men. God's Mercies are the great Subject of our Devotion; for these we make our Prayers when we are in Want; for these we render our Praises when we have receiv'd them. Hosannahs and Hallelujahs, as one well observes, make up the whole Book of Psalms.

THE Knowledge of God is necessary for us on feveral Accounts. We cannot contemplate the Excellency of his Perfections, and the infinite Greatness of his Majesty, but we must acknowledge him most worthy to be ador'd and glorified. And when we conceive how this excellent Majesty fills all Places with his Presence, it must strike us with a prosound and awful Regard for him. We cannot own his fovereign Dominion over us, his almighty Power, his exact and impartial Juflice, but we must at the same time, acknowledge our felves bound to observe all his Laws with most refign'd, obedient, and willing Minds. How confirm'd will our Hopes be in his infinite Mercies, how inflam'd our Love through his Goodness, how secure

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our Trust in the unchangeable Truth of his Promises! Do we derive from him all the Faculties of our Souls and Bodies, and shall we not readily employ them in his Service, and yield our Members Instruments of Righteousness? Is he our Fountain of Comfort, the Author and Giver of all good Things, and can we refuse to make our Supplications to him for whatever we fland in need of, and to render him unfeigned Thanks and Praise for all the Bleffings we receive thefe we make our Prayers who shink aid ta

THE Holy Pfalmist calls upon the Sun, Moon and Stars, Fire and Hail, Snow and Vapours; and upon all the animate and manimate Parts of the Creation, to fet forth the Praises of the Lord (a). Let not Man then, who has a Heart to conceive, and a Tongue to confess, be dumb to the Praises of his high Benefactor. Indeed this is properly and frictly the Province of rational Creatures alone. For though all other Beings constantly obey the Laws of their Creation, and tend regularly to the Ends for which they were appointed; yet they know not the Hand which form'd them, nor the Power which preferves and directs them; they are void of Understanding, and confequently have no Notion of Religion nor Sense of Gratitude. Man is the only Creature upon Earth, that is wife enough to know and willing Minds. How consermed will our

Hopes be in his infinite Mercles, how inflamed our Love through the later wish, how fecure CHAP.I. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 13

obey his God in religious and moral Actions. This is finely represented in the 28th Chap. of the Book of Job; where that Holy Man, in his Search after Wisdom declares, The Depth faith, It is not in me; and the Sea faith, It is not with me. Destruction and Death Say; We have heard the Fame thereof with our Ears. God understandeth the Way thereof, and he knoweth the Place thereof. When he made a Decree for the Rain, and a Way for the Lightning of the Thunder; then did he see it and declare it; he prepared it, yea, and fearched it out. And unto Man he said; Behold, the Fear of the Lord, that is Wisdom, and to depart from Evil, is Understanding. Death, Reduireduct and Alcen-



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CHAP. II.

OF

JESUS CHRIST,

His Eternal Godhead, Incarnation, Oc.



HE Promised MESSIAS OF CHRISTA whom the Fathers expected, and the Prophets foretold, whose Life, Death, Refurrection and Ascenfion, the Evangelists relate, is that

Tesus whom we worship; begotten of the Substance of his Father before all Worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made; being Coeffential, Coeternal and

Coequal with the Father and the Holy Ghoft.

THIS Felus whom God fent to be our Saviour and Deliverer, took to himself a true Body, being conceiv'd by the incomprehenfible Power of the Holy Ghost, in the Womb of Mary, a pure Virgin, of whom, in due Time, he was born into the World. Thus he became a real Man. and was made like unto us in all things, even in the natural Infirmities of Hunger, Thirst, Weariness, Grief, Pain, and the like; yet without Sin. In which Respect he is called the Son of Man, because he was Flesh of our Flesh, he took our Nature upon him; and the Son

CHAP. II. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 15

Son of David, because in his human Capacity he descended of the Stock and Lineage of David.

IT was requisite that our Blessed Saviour should be Man, because he was to perform perfect Obedience to the whole Law of God, and because he was to suffer and die for our Sins; which in his Divine Nature he could not have done. He must be of the same Nature with the Party offending, that he might satisfie the Justice of God in the same Nature wherein it was offended. For so the Righteousness of God did require, that the same Nature which had committed the Sin, should also pay and make Satisfaction for it; and consequently, that human Nature, which offended in the First Adam, should be punish'd in the Second.

Thus then the two Natures in Christ are accounted for. He was Man, that he might be capable of fuffering for Sin: He was God, that he might be able to bear the Punishment, and overcome the Suffering. Human Nature can fuffer Death, but cannot overcome it; the Divine Nature cannot suffer, but can overcome all things. Our Mediator therefore, being Partaker of both Natures, was by the one made subject to Suffering, and by the other enabled to overcome all the Sufferings that could be laid upon him. Herein was his Fitness to become a Mediator, and to to be the Author of Reconciliation between God and Man, because he was himself both God and Man.

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HE is called Jefus, that is, a Saviour, because he came to save his People from their Sins: He is called Christ, that is, Anointed, because he was anointed of God to be a PRO-PHET. PRIEST and KING over all his People. Anointed he was, not with material Oyl, but with all the Gifts and Graces of the Holy Ghoft, and that in the bighest Plenitude and

Perfection. and ed to ed flum eli enob The first Part of our Lord's Mediation was discharged in the Execution of his Prophetick Office, which may be consider'd two Ways; Either as he was a Teacher fent from God to infruct Men in the right Knowledge and Worship of the Divine Majerty; or as he was a Foreteller of Things to come. The first he perform'd by his Sermons and holy Expolitions of the Law of God; and by fending forth his Disciples to preach the same Doctrines. For he testified that he came from the Bosom of the Father, to declare his Nature and whole Will to the World; and that he alone had the Power and Prerogative to do this. For, fays he; no Man knoweth the Father, but the Son, and he to whom

the Son will reveal him (a).

IN His Predictions our Lord shew'd himfelf a true Prophet, as appears by two fignal Instances. One was, The Destruction of the City and Temple of Jerusalem, which he foretold with all the particular Circumstances both

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as to the Time and Manner of it; all which was punctually fulfill'd, even according to the Accounts which the Jewish Historians give us of that Matter. And when afterwards the Emperor Julian, deligning to blast the Credit of our Saviour's Prophecy, resolved to rebuild the Temple, and set Men to work about it, he was soon fore'd to desist from his Enterprize, by Earthquakes and Balls of Fire issuing from the Foundation, which burnt down what was erected, and destroy'd those that were imploy'd in the Work. And this we have attested both by Christian and Pagan Writers of that Time.

Saviour's Prophecy of the Rejection of the Jews, and that they should be carried Captive into all Nations, till the Times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled. Now this we see hath been accomplished for many Ages, and still continues to be so in our Days.

THE Priesthood of the Messiah was reveal'd of old by the Psalmist in these Words (a): The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent; Thou art a Priest for ever after the Order of Melchizedek. The Priest's Office consisted in offering Sacristice for the Sins of the People, in interceding for them, and blessing them. It is therefore necessary, says the Apostle (b), that this Man Jesus have some what also to offer. And what that was he tells us in another Place; (c) He hath given himself

⁽a) Pfal. 110. 4. (b) Heb. 8 3. (c) Eplef. 5. 2.

an Offering and a Sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling Savour. He is our Passover facrificed for us; by the offering of his Body are we sanctified (a). When he had thus given himself a propitiatory Sacrifice for our Sins, he afcended up on high, and enter'd into the Holy of Holies, not made with Hands, where he fitteth at the Right Hand of God to make Intercession for us (b): And this not in a precarious, but efficacious and glorious Manner, as having all Power in Heaven and Earth committed to him. And for the third Part of the Sacerdotal Office, which consists in Benediction, we find it in the Preaching of our Lord, which begins with the Beatitudes; and in the Conclusion of his Ministry on Earth, when he lifted up his Hands upon his Disciples, and blessed them (c). However, this part of his Function is most eminently perform'd after his Refurrection, as it is intimated in that encouraging Sermon of St. Peter to that Generation who crucified our Lord: (d) Unto you first God having raised up his son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning every one of you from his Iniquities. So that it clearly appears, that Jejus Christ who offered up himself a full, perfect, and fufficient Sacrifice for Sin, who is continually making Intercession for us, and bleffes us with all spiritual Bleffings, is our most glorious High-Priest.

⁽a) Heb. 10. 10. (b) Heb. 7. 25. (c) Luke 24. 50. (d) Alls 3. 26.

THE Kingly Office of Christ consistes in the Exercise of that Power given him by God over all, for the spiritual Government and Salvation of his Elect, and for the Destruction of his and their Enemies: And that he might appoint Laws and Statutes which should direct his People and bind their Consciences to the Obedience of the same: That he might settle a Government, and appoint Officers in his Church for the good ordering of it: That he might defend his Flock from the Violence and Outrage of all their Enemies both Corporal and Spiritual: And that he might bestow many notable Privileges and Rewards upon them.

Our blessed Lord was pleased to declare before Pontius Pilate, That his Kingdom was not of this World, i.e. that he lay'd no Claim to temporal Dominion, in Opposition to Casar, as his Accusers infinuated. Yet we may venture to affert his Regal Title even to an earthly Jerusalem, he being the last of the direct Line of David, which was the Royal Family of the Jewish Kingdom; but his Spiritual Kingdom is what we are chiefly to understand, which tho' not of this World, yet is in this World in part, fo far as his Church and People subsist in it. And herein he has shewn himself a King, by that Power which he manifested as well in triumphing over Death and Hell, as in enabling all his People to triumph over them, in ascending up into Heaven, sitting on the right Hand of God the Father, and thence shower-

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flowering down Spiritual Gifts and Graces

Exercise of that Power given.hard Sind noque

THIS Kingly Government of Christ was foretold by feveral Prophecies, particularly by that of Isaiah (a), For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the Government is upon his Shoulder, and he shall call his Name, Wonderful, Counsellour, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the Increase of his Government and Peace there shall be no End, upon the Throne of David, and upon his Kingdom, to order it and to establish even for ever. The Substance of which Prophecy, is repeated by the Angel in his Salutation of the Blessed Virgin (b). And the Accomplishment of it publickly affirm'd by St. Peter (e) in his first Sermon to the Fews: Let all the House of Ifrael know affuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye crucified, both Lord and Christ. And St. Paul afferts the same (d), God bath highly exalted him, and given him a Name which is above every Name: That at the Name of JESUS every Knee (bould bow, of Things in Heaven, and Things in Earth, and Things under the Earth: And that every Tongue Should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father. And again (e) unto the Son he faith, Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever: A Scepter of Righteousness is the Scepter of thy Kingdom. Thou haft loved Righte-

⁽a) Chap. 9. 6, 7. (b) Luke 1. 32, 33. (c) Ads 2. 36. (d)
Phil. 2. 9, 10, 11. (e) Heb. 1. 8, 9. ou[ne]s

onfres and hated Iniquity, therefore God, even thy God, bath anointed thee with the Oyl of Gladness above thy Fellows. Finally, St. John in his Vision (a), saw Heaven open'd, and behold a white Horse, and he that sate upon him was called Faithful and True, and in Righteousness he doth judge and make War. His Eyes were as a Flame of Fire, and on his Head were many Crowns, and he had a Name written that no Man knew but he himfelf. And he was cloathed with a Vesture dipp'd in Blood: and his Name is called, The WORD of GOD. And the Armies which were in Heaven, follow'd him upon white Horses, cloathed in fine Linnen, white and clean. And out of his Mouth goeth a sharp Sword, that with it he bould fmite the Nations; and he (hall rale them with a Rod of Iron, and he treadeth the Winepress of the Fierceness and Wrath of Almighty God. of And he hath on his Vesture and on his Thigh a Name written, KING OFKINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. And thus much for the Two Natures, and Three Offices of Christ. I shall now proceed to such Arguments as are proper to strengthen our Faith, and confirm our Hope and Affiance in him.

What can we have clearer Proof and Demonstration of, than of the Truth and Sanctity of our Christian Religion? When we consider how miraculously the Author of it was born of a pure Virgin; how a glorious Star appear'd and pointed out the Place of his Nativity; how a Choir of Angels celebrated it as Tydings of

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Joy to the whole World; how the wife Men of the East, directed by the heavenly Light, came and worshipped him, giving him Divine Offerings and Royal Presents; when we confider his finless Perfection, his great Endowments which manifested themselves in his Childhood; the many Miracles he did, as raifing Lazarus and others from the Dead; his healing all manner of Difeases, only with a Word of his Mouth, or a Touch of his Hand; his fasting forty Days and Nights, so far beyond the Power of any meer Man, who can hardly abstain from eating and drinking four Days and Nights together; his walking upon the Sea, commanding the Winds and Waves to be still; feeding five Thousand with five Loaves and two small Fishes; with innumerable more Instances of the like Nature; to say nothing here of his own Refurrection out of the Grave on the third Day, and ascending into Heaven in the Presence of many Spectators: What further Demonstration, I fay, can we require for fixing and establishing our Faith in Christ? These are undoubtedly more than fufficient for this Purpose, if they do but come well attested to us: And they are attested by fuch a Cloud of unexceptionable Witnesses brought home to us, that we must believe nothing, if we will not believe them. That great Master-Builder St. Paul, lays the Foundation of Faith in fuch Testimonies (a), Say that is, to bring Christ from above: Or, Who shall descend into the Deep? that is, to bring up Christ again from the Dead. But what it saith? The Word is nigh thee, even in thy Mouth, and in thy Heart; that is, the Word of Faith which we preach. This Word is what we are entirely to rely upon; tho' we thankfully receive such corroborating Evidences as are given us by pious and learned Men; among whom a worthy Divine of our own Country has done good Service, in the Account of his Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem: Whose Observations to our present Purpose, I shall here set down.

"AT Bethlehem, says he, is to be seen the Place where our Saviour was born, and the Manger wherein he was laid. Near to Bethlehem, is the Place where stood the House of Simeon that venerable old Prophet, who taking our Blessed Saviour in his Arms, sung his Nunc dimittie in the Temple. Near this Place is to be seen the samous Turpentine Tree, in the Shade of which, the blessed Virgin is said to have reposed, when she was carrying Christ in her Arms to present him to the Lord in Jerusalem.

"AT Bethany, a little without Jerusalem, is "to be seen the Sepulchre of Lazarus, out "of which he arose at that enlivening

"Voice of Christ, LAZARUS, come forth."
"There is to be seen near it, a Mansion"House

24 .MOID The SUM of the O PARTIL " House where this Favourite of our Lord that is, to bring Christ from above: Glaville" 14 Je Jerusalem, the Armenianshave a Church wherein are laid up three large rough Stones; "two of which are faid to be brought from "the Place of our Lord's Baptism. Here are "likewife to be feen, W sid! " dream on distant H THE Place where our Saviour fed the "Multitude with the Loaves and Fishes." "The Place where he was nail'd to the Crofs 13 "where the Soldier pierc'd his Side; where " his Body was anointed in order to his Burial "where it was deposited in the Sepulchre; "where the Angels appear'd to his Disciples " after his Refurrection, and where Christ " himself appear'd to Mary Magdalen. THE Stone that was laid to fecure the "Door of our Saviour's Sepulchre. The" "Place where St. Peter was frighted to a" "Denial of his Mafter. Where our Lord "instituted his last Supper. The Place of his "Afcention, where he fet his last Footsteps " hiereson Earth me Tody in attimal ann V. zin " "THE Place they call St. Peter's Prilon, "from which he was deliver'd by the Ah-"gel: Near it is the Iron Gate which open'd "to Peter of its own accord. " A PREYTIES and " THE Place where a Tew arrested the "Corps of the Bleffed Virgin, as it was go-"ing to be interr'd; for which impious "Prefumption the Hands with which he " feized the Bier was wither'd. It and soil "There is to be feen near it, a Mansion-House THE.

"THE Place where are Twelve arched Vaults, built in Memory of the Twelve Apostles, who are said to have compil'd their Creed in this Place, and the Place where the Apostles divided to go to their several Charges.

But notwithstanding these Things; the Word, says St. Paul, is nigh thee; that sure Word which we are commanded to attend to, and stedsastly regard, as a Light shining in a dark Place; by which we may see most clearly and fully all that our Lord did and suffer'd for us. By this Light is shown the Innocence, Sanctity, and Divinity of the Son of God, in a most conspicuous and eminent Manner, with such an unaffected Plainness and Strength of Reason, as cannot be restifted.

WHEN Pontius Pilate the Roman Governor fate in Judgment upon him, and had examin'd him, he called the Chief Priests and Rulers of the Jews together, and said to them, Te have brought this Man unto me, as one that perverteth the People; and behold I have examin'd him before you, and have found no Fault in him: No, nor yet Herod, for I sent you to him; and lo, nothing worthy of Death is done to him: I will therefore chastise him, and let him go. And when he was sat down on the Judgment-Seat, his Wife sent unto him,

^{*} Luke 23. 14, Sc. b Matt. 27. 19, Sc.

faying, Have thou nothing to do with that Just Man; for I have Suffer'd many Things in a Dream this Day because of him. After all, when Pilate faw that he could not prevail with the Jems to release him, but that they cried out, in a tumultuous manner, to have him crucified; He took Water, and washed his Hands before the Multitude, Saying, I am innocent of the Blood of this Just Person: See Te to it. Likewise Judas, though he had betray'd his Mafter, yet he could not forbear to speak in his Vindication, and plead for him at last; openly acknowledging to the Chief Priests and Elders, That he had betray'd innocent Blood. Laftly, The Roman Centurion, who kept the Guard upon this Occasion, and they that were with him watching Jefus, when they faw the Earthquake, and those Things that were done feared greatly, faying, Truly, this was the SON of GOD. Now these Testimonies are highly Honourable and Advantageous to the Caufe of Chrift. He had affirm'd himfelf to be the Son of God; He was accused for it, and brought to his Tryal about it; and those who fat in Judgment upon him, pronounced him Not Guilty: Surely, great was his Meekness, clear his Innocence, strong the Evidences of his Divinity, which extprted fuch Declarations from Persons not otherwise disposed to make them! on the Judgment-Seat, bis Wifte lent

But how shall we be able to estimate the Greatness, the Immensity of Christ's Love towards us? and with what Comparison shall we compare it? Can there hardly be found a Man upon Earth, who will lay down his Life to fave his Best Friend? If fuch a one might be found, yet the Love of Christ is incomparably greater, who was content to Die for his Enemies. To Die, not an Honourable, Easie, Speedy kind of Death; but the Shameful, Painful, Lingering Death of the Cross. To pass through the Hands of the rude Multitude, and fustain a Load of Scorn and Reproach from them, more intolerable than any common Sort of Death: And after a cruel Tryal of Mocking and Scourging, and a tiresome March under the Burden of a heavy Cross, when natural Strength was spent, and the Spirits grown faint, to be pierced through the Hands and Feet, and thereby fastened to the Cross, and so left to expire by slow Degrees, between no better Company than two infamous Malefactors: I fay, For Christ willingly to submit, and offer up Himself such a bloody Sacrifice as this, for our Redemption, who were then at Enmity with him, is a Degree of Love far furpassing our Understanding to estimate or comprehend it. And therefore St. Paul thought it enough to know Jesus Christ, and him Crucified: more than this he professes he desir'd not to know: " How to comprehend the

^{*} Ephef. 3. 18.

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Breadth and Length, and Depth and Height of this, and to know the Love of Christ, which passeth Knowledge, was his ardent Prayer for himself and his People. This he calls, AMystery, which hath been hid from Ages and from Generations, but now is made manifest to the Saints. God forbid, says he, that I should glory, save in the Cross of Christ, by which the World is crucified unto me, and I unto the World. And, We preach Christ crucified, unto the fews a Stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks Foolishness: But unto them which are Called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God.



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a Col. 1. 26. b Gal. 6. 14. c 1 Cor. 1. 23, 24.



CHAP. III.

HOLY GHOST,

His Divine Inspiration and Operations.

HE HOLY GHOST is likewise GOD, Co-essential, Co-eternal, and Co-equal with the FATHER and the SON. He proceedeth

and the SON. He proceedeth from the FATHER and the SON; which is proved from Christ's own Words, who tells his Disciples, in his Discourses with them a little before his Ascension, a These Things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my Name, he shall teach you all Things, and bring all Things to your Remembrance, what soever I have said unto you. Here he says, The Father shall send the Holy Ghost: But in the next Chapter, he says, b When the Comforter, i.e. the Holy Ghost, is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testisse of Me. In his last Charge to his Disciples to go and preach the Gospel, c He

³ John 14 25, 26. , Verse 26. c John 20. 22.

breathed on them, and faid unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghoft. In the Writings of the Apollles, he is call'd, The Spirit of the Father and of the Son. These are Proofs, That the Holy Spirit proceeds both from the First and Second Per-

fon in the GODHEAD

But he so proceeds, not as a Quality or Influence, but as a Real Person, distinct from the Father and the Son. John the Baptist, fpeaking of Christ's Manifestation to the World, fays, I faw the Spirit descending from Heaven like a Dove, and it abode upon him: which, he fays, was the Sign given him, whereby to know Christ. I knew him not : but he that fent me to baptize with Water, the same said unto me; Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost: And I faw, and bear Record, That this is the Son of God. Now John baptized our Lord, and this happen'd at his Baptism: b Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the Water: and, lo! the Heaven's were opened unto him, and he fair the Spirit of God descending like a Dove, and lighting upon him. And, lo! a Voice from Heaven, Saying, This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

IN Conformity to this Revelation of the GODHEAD in THREE PERSONS, the Form of Baptism to be used all over the Christian World, was conceived and appointed by Christ Himself, to be In the Name of the Father,

⁵ John 1. 32, &c. b Matt. 3. 16, 17.

CHAP. III. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 31

and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. In the Name of these Three Persons, St. Paul has taught the Ministers of Christ to bless their Congregations. To these Three the Church gives Glory and Praises in her Doxologies, confesses them in her Creeds, invokes them in her Prayers, teaches them in her Homilies, and Systems of Christian Doctrine. From all which it is apparently manisest, That the Holy Ghost is God, as well as the Father and the Son.

But if it be demanded, Whether the Holy Ghost is any where in the Scriptures expressly called God? the Answer is obvious in Acts 5. 3, 4. where Peter reproving Ananias for keeping back from the Church, Part of the Money for which he fold his Estate, contrary to what he pretended, speaks thus; Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine Heart to lie to the Holy Ghost? Thou hast not lied unto Men, but unto GOD. These Words are plain enough for every one to make the Application. And thus much for the Personality of the Holy Ghost. Let us next consider his Operations and Offices.

WHEN Christ was ascended into Heaven, he did, according as he had promised, send down the Holy Ghost upon his Disciples, which inabled them to speak with divers Tongues, so as to be understood of all Nations, and inspired them with great Courage and Eloquence, to preach the Gospel; and endued them with a Power to work Miracles for the Consirmation of what they preached.

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ALL Scripture is faid to be given by In-Spiration of this Spirit. Prophesie, says St. Peter, came not in Old Time by the Will of Man; but Holy Men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghoft. This is what gives it fuch a high Authority, and makes it so infinitely preferable to any other Writings. All the Graces of Illumination, Faith, Wildom, Courage, Eloquence, are the Gifts of this Divine Spirit. Our Lord forewarns his Disciples what Treatment they should meet with in the World on the Account of their Religion b, They (ball deliver you up to Councils, and in the Synagogues ye shall be beaten, and ye shall be brought before Rulers and Kings for my Sake. But when they Shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no Thought before-hand, what ye (ball speak, neither do ye premeditate : but what soever shall be given you in that Hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghoft. In the parallel Place, 'tis thus: Settle it in your Hearts, not to meditate before, what ve Shall answer .: for I will give you a Mouth and Wisdom which all your Adversaries shall not be able to gainfay nor resist. Accordingly, St. Stephen, the First Martyr of Christ, after the Apostles had pray'd, and laid their Hands on him, was fill'd with the Holy Ghost, and did great Wonders and Miracles, and the Spirit and Wisdom by which he spake, was so powerful, that the Philosophers and learned Doctors were not able to withstand him. d

^{1 2} Pet, 1 21, Mark 13, 9, 11. 5 Jake 21, 14, 15. Att 6. 8, 850 TO

TO the same Spirit are ascribed all the Graces of Sanctification: Love, Joy, Peace, and all Christian Virtues, are call'd, The Fruits of the Spirit. And as in the Work of Creation, the Spirit of God moved upon the Face of the Waters, so in the Work of Regeneration, the same quickening Spirit moves in us, inlightens our Understandings, opens, softens, and renews our Hearts; makes us Spiritually and Heavenly Minded, sanctifies our Thoughts, regulates our disorderly Passions, strengthens us against Temptations, and conveys secret Streams of Joy and Comfort into our Souls.

WHEREFORE it is both our Duty and Interest constantly to implore the Assistance and Fellowship of this Blessed Spirit, that by his Holy Inspiration we may think those Things that are Good, and by his merciful Guidance may perform the same. If ye being Evil, know how to give good Gifts unto your Children; how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? b Likewise the Spirit helpeth our Infirmities : for we know not what we should pray for, as we ought: but the Spirit it self maketh Intercession for us, with Groanings which cannot be uttered. The Love of God is shed abroad in our Hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. d Know ye not that your Body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, and ye are not your own? Therefore glorifie God in your Body and in your Spirit, which are God's.

^{*} Luke 11. 13. bRom. 8. 26. Rom. 5. 5. d 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20.



CHAP. IV.

OF THE Me of odi

Ever-Bleffed TRINITY.

LTHOUGH the Word TRINITY be no where to be found in Holy Scripture, yet the Interpretation of it, is, viz. That there are Three distinct Persons in the Godhead, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. And though there had been no fingle Text wherein this Doctrine was fully express'd (as there are feveral) yet would it be a True Doctrine notwithstanding; being interwoven throughout the Body of the Old and New Testament, as has in Part been proved already, while we were shewing every Person by Himself to be GOD and LORD; and will be abundantly evident to fuch as are well read in the Sacred Writings. The Manner how this Trinity in Unity manifests it felf to us, is thus: The Work of Creation, wherein is specially seen the mighty Power of God, is appropriated to the FATHER; the Work of Redemption, wherein is specially seen the Wifdom of God, to the Son; and the Works of Sanctification, and Infusion of Habitual Graces, whereby the Good Things of God are com-municated unto us, are appropriated to the Нога Сност.

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by the Latin Church, as a proper, comprehensive Term, to signific the Three Persons in the Godhead. It is found in Tertullian adversus Praxeam, who slourish'd in the Begining of the Third Century: At which Time, the Greek Church used the Word TRIAS, which

fignifies the fame Thing.

THAT there are Three Persons in the Godhead; that every Person by Himself is God and Lord, and yet that there is but One God, is an Article of Faith which we are bound to Believe, though we cannot fully Understand it. We believe a great many other Things which we don't understand, only because we are well affur'd of the Truth and Reality of them. And fo we are of this great Mystery: We find it contain'd in the Word of God: To that, therefore, we must submit and yield our Affent; and fay with the pious Father, While others Dispute, I Believe : which is all that is requir'd of us; for it was only intended for the Object of our Faith, and not of our Understanding in this Life. How many Mysteries are there which God hath plac'd out of our Sight, and which are only to be reached by Faith and Contemplation? As long as we are here in the Body, b we fee fuch Things as these but as through a Glass, darkly; but when we shall be advanted to the perfect State of the Blessed in Heaven, then we shall see Face to Face, and know even as also we are known.

Cap. 10. 1 Cer. 13. 12,



CHAP. V.

OF THE

HOLY ANGELS.

Their Nature and Ministry.

EFORE the CREATION of this visi-B ble WORLD, God made an innumerable Company of Spirits, which we call ANGELS. Some of

these continue in their first Holy and Happy State, Obeying, Loving, Praising, and Injoying Gob, and Performing fuch Services as he is pleased to imploy them in, for his own Glory, and the Good of Mankind. Some of the Angels Rebell'd, and were, with their Prince or Leader, call'd, The Prince of Devils, The Old Serpent, and Satan, cast out of Heaven, banish'd from the Society of Holy and Blessed Spirits, and are referved in everlasting Chains under Darkness, unto the Judgment of the Great Day.

THE Devil seduced our First Parents, and perfuaded them to transgress the Command of God; and by that Means brought Sin and Death into the World. And he still continues his Hostility against the whole Race of Man-kind, using his utmost Endeavours, both by 1 Cor. 12, 18

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Force

CHAP. V. CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

Force and Fraud, to fill all Places with Sin and Misery. For which End he sometimes acts the Part of a Roaring Lyon, going about, seeking whom he may devour; and sometimes he transforms himself into the Shape of an Angel of Light, that he may the more easily deceive.

But, on the contrary, Good Angels are appointed for the Defence and Benefit of God's Chosen People. Their General Commission is, To be Guardians and Keepers of the Heirs of Salvation. This the Psalmist teaches us: He shall give his Angels Charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy Ways. And again, b The Angel of the Lord incampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. And St. Paul affirms, That they are all ministring Spirits, seat forth to minister for them who shall be Heirs of Salvation.

This Doctrine is confirm'd by the Historical Accounts of the Old and New Testament. The Angels attended upon the Patriarchs in their Travels, as Abraham and the rest thankfully acknowledge. They deliver'd Lot and his Family out of Sodom, conducted the Children of Israel from Egypt, to the Land of Canaan, brought Messages and Instructions to them afterwards: And we read, How an Angel was sent to Manoah, to direct what Course the Mother should take whilst she

Pfalm 91. 11. Pfalm 34. 7. 'Heb, 1. ult.

went with Child of Sampson :: And David makes a special Remark on such a Providence of God, b By which he was cover'd in his Mother's Womb; that is, was graciously kept from what might destroy him while he lay there. And as David praised God for this, so should all Mothers remember to do it too; as well as all that are born of them. Thou art He, that took me out of my Mother's Womb. And, in Cafes of Extremity, Angels had frequent Communication

with their Prophets and Holy Persons.

ANGELS are Spirits, fays the Scripture; but God, when he thinks fit, causes them to assume Bodies; for it is certain, that the Angels that appear'd to Abraham and Lot, were embodied; for they are faid to Eat and Drink, and mention is made of walking their Feet : and they took Lot and his Wife and Daughters by the Hand. But, alas! how should we hope to comprehend the Essence and Dignity of Angels, fo far above us, when we feel our felves unable to find out the Nature and Perfection of this very Soul within us? What fort of Being must this be, which inspires a Lump of otherwise Dead Flesh with Life and Activity, and yet, when most desirous so to do, cannot confine its

Thoughts to Holy Exercises?
WE find, That the Blessed Angels inhabit Heaven, in such an innumerable Company as Mankind do the Earth: For there are, say the Scriptures, Thousands of

Judges 13. 13, 14. Pfalms 71, 16.

Thousands, Myriads, an innumerable Host of Holy Angels, continually waiting in the Prefence of God. These are the Happy Spirits who offer a Sacrifice of pure Praise before the Throne of God continually; who are ever ravish'd with the Contemplations of his Perfections, and fee them, not like us, through a Glaß, darkly, but near at Hand, and Face to Face. What Tongue can express, what Thoughts conceive, the admirable Beauty, the exact Order, the numberless Multitude of this Heavenly Host! The inexhaustible Source of Joy springing from the Beatifick Vision! The Blessedness derived to them from the Fountain of All Blifs!

O Praise the LORD, all ye Works of his! in all Places of His Dominion : Praise the LORD, O. my Soul! Let us magnifie that Great God, whom Angels praise, whom Dominions adore, before whom Powers fall down and tremble; whose excellent Glory Cherubim and Seraphim proclaim with loud incessant Voices!

In the New Testament, at the Beginning of the Gospels, we find the Angels coming before our Lord, as his Heralds to prepare his Way for him; first, Giving Notice of his Conception, then celebrating his Nativity, and proclaiming his Birth to the World. Afterwards, upon feveral Occasions; as, In his Deliverance from Herod, in his Temptation, in his Agony, at his Refurrection and Ascension, the Angels attended on him, and ministred unto him. THE

THE like Attendance they gave to his Apoftles, especially to those Three eminent Ones, St. Peter, Paul, and John, revealing the Mind of God to them, warning them how to avoid impending Dangers, and delivering them out of Prison in a miraculous Manner, when they were fast bound with Chains, and kept under a ftrong Guard.

FROM whence we may learn, That the Holy Angels are very much imploy'd about Men, and that by means of this Ministration, they know much of human Affairs in General, but more of the State and Condition of those particular Persons whom they have in

Charge. WE learn likewise, from the invariable Goodness of their Nature, that they are mightily pleased with the Welfare of Mankind; but with that most of all, wherein the Glory of God, and the Happiness of Man most eminently meet together: I mean, The Converfion and Repentance of a Sinner. Which though they cannot know fully of themselves, as to the Sincerity of it, because they cannot fearch the Heart; yet they can make better Obfervations than we, whereby to infer it: And for the rest, I doubt not, but the Father of Spirits, and Searcher of Hearts, communicates it to them, and they with Gladness spread abroad the good News among all the Inhabitants of Heaven: and so a Joy goes round among the Angels of God, as often as they hear of any one Penitent Soul who is to be added to their bleft

CHAP. V. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 41 blest Abodes. This our Lord, who perfectly understood the Court of Heaven, assures us, That there is Joy in the Presence of the Angels of God, over one Sinner that repenteth.

THE Thanks that we owe for the good Offices of Angels, are due to God; the Prayers that we make for their Affistance, must be made to GoD. This we are taught from one End of Holy Scripture, to the other. Abraham encouraged his Servant to fetch a Wife for his Son Mase from a remote Place, by telling him, The Lord God of Heaven shall fend his Angel before thee. Daniel in the Den of Lions, calls out to the King, and tells him, My God hath Sent his Angel, and hath shut the Lions Mouths, that they have not burt me. And when St. John fell down to worship, at the Feet of the Angel, which shew'd him his Heavenly Visions, he charges him, d See thou do it not: for I am thy Fellow Servant: - Worship GOD.

In Conformity to what has been faid, the Church has taught us to pray, That as the Angels always do God Service in Heaven; for they may, by his Appointment, succour and defend us on Earth.

old " Thus the Land of Canaa

^{*} Luke 15. 10. Gen. 24. 7. Dan. 6. 22. Rev. 22. 9.



CHAP. VI.

OF THE

Sacred SCRIPTURES,

Their Truth and Excellency.

HE HOLY SCRIPTURES have received the constant Attestation of all Ages, and have, by a wonderful Providence, been pre-

ferved and transmitted down to our Days. And very Remarkable it is, That notwithstanding the Variety of their Matter, the Diversity of Persons by whom, Places where, and Times when they were written ; yet there is fuch a fweet Harmony between these Writings, and fuch an Uniformity of the Matters contain'd in them, that one don't clash with, and overthrow another, as it often happens in the Writings of Men.

MOREOVER, The Holy Scriptures bear Witness to themselves, in the Accomplishment of the many Promises therein contain'd, and Predictions of Things to come, with the Circumstances of the Things, and Names of the Persons foretold. Thus the Land of Canaan was promised to the Posterity of Abraham, when he had no Inheritance in it; nay, when,

in all human Probability, he could have no Child to fucceed him. The Prophecy concerning Josias was 321 Years, and that concerning Cyrus 100 Years, before either of them were born: And yet the Names they should bear, and the Works they should do, were expressly mention'd so long before. The Rejection of the Jews, and Calling of the Gentiles, is spoken of from Moses, to the last of the Prophets, at fuch Times as the Jews were in a flourishing Condition, and made no Question but they should always be the peculiar People of God. Laftly, The Prophecies of the MESSIAH are continued all along from the Patriarchs, to the Incarnation of Christ, and are very particular about the Circumstances of his Birth, Life, and Sufferings. Insomuch that our Lord appeals not only to his Miracles; but likewise to Moses and the Prophets, for Proof of his being the True MESSIAH * Search the Scriptures, fays He to the unbelieving Jews, for they are they that testifie of me: And, b Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me; for he wrote of Me. And after he had suffered, and was Risen from the Dead; while his Disciples were in some Suspence what to think of him, he appear'd to them, and upbraided them with their Hardness of Heart, and Unbelief : " O Fools, and flow of Heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken!

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^{*} John 5. 39. b Ver. 46. Luke 24 25, 26, 27.

Ought not Christ to have suffer'd these Things, and to enter into his Glory? And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures, the Things concerning Him-

felf.

AGAIN, The Holy Scriptures prove themfelves to be the Word of God, by that great Efficacy and Power which is in them. The Word of God, fays St. Paul, a is quick and powerful, and sbarper than any two-edged Sword, piercing even to the dividing afunder of Soul and Spirit, and of the Joints and Marrow, and is a Discerner of the Thoughts and Intents of the Heart. When these Sacred Writings were translated into our Language, which was carefully perform'd by the best Scholars and gravest Men of our Nation, the People univerfally admir'd them, and with great Satisfaction heard the Clergy read them in the Churches. And the Reading of the Scriptures, gave the greatest Blow of any thing, to the former Superstitions of Popery, as Image-worsbip, Pilgrimages, Invocation of Saints, &c. Such of the Heathen Writers as have perused them, have willingly preferr'd them, for Sublimity and Majesty of Style, before their own celebrated Writings. And, indeed, none of theirs come near them. even with all the Disadvantages of our Translation, which being obliged to be Literal, must needs lose many Beauties of the Original. But still we see and admire the Plainness and Suc-

Heb. 4. 12,

cinciness of the Historical Parts, the Melody of the Psalms, the wife and comprehensive In-Aructions of the Proverbs, the exalted Thoughts of the Prophets: And, above all, that easie Sweetness in the NewTestament, where the Glory of Heaven is fet forth in grave and becoming Language, not like the Flights of Rhetoricians, who fet out small Matters in great Words. *All Scripture, fays St. Paul, is given by Inspiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousnes; That the Man of God may be perfect, thoroughly

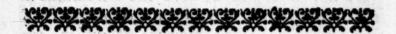
furnished unto all Good Works.

TO know how to value the Holy Scriptures, to have a true Relish of their Divine Spirit, and to render them truly Beneficial and Comfortable to our Souls, we must Study them well, Read them often, Hear them with Reverence and Attention. For a frequent Perufal will bring us to a right Understanding, and a right Understanding will make us find great Pleasure in the Word of God. What can be a greater Honour, than to hear God fpeaking to us? What can be of greater Importance, than the Instructions of Everlasting Salvation? Here are the Rules by which we must Govern all our Thoughts, Words, and Actions; and by These we shall be Tryed and Examin'd by our Great Judge: For to He Himself has forewarn'd us : b The Word that I have spoken,

^{* 2} Tim. 3. 16, 17. b John 12. 48.

the same shall Judge you at the Last Day. There fore we must not study these Sacred Books only that we may readily Quote them, and be able to Dispute out of them; but we must fo Read, as to Practife, and fo Hear, as to Obey. Men should not be so sollicitous as they are to fill their Heads with Controversial Points, which serve more for Strife and Debate, than for Establishing the Truth; but they ought much rather to warm their Hearts with Pious and Useful Doctrines, to encourage themselves in all Adversities with the Assurances and Manifestations of the infinite Love of God, to strengthen their Hopes with his Promises, to fly from Sin through a Fear of his Threatnings, and to quicken their Zeal for all Good Works, by having much at Heart the ferious Perfualions and Exhortations of the Holy Penmen. This Method of studying the Holy Scriptures, would not fail to attain the Happy End for which they were written, and make Men wife unto Salvation.





CHAP. VII.

OF

RELIGION from its Beginning.

THE

PATRIARCHAL Dispensation.

HAT Men in all Times and Ages of the World, have been under the Direction of a LAW, to which they were bound to con-

form their Actions, is what we must needs grant, if we believe any Thing of the Final Doom and Judgment of all Mankind: For how can Men be accountable to the Judge for what they were not obliged by any known LAW, to Avoid, or Do? It being an infallible Maxim, That where there is no Law, there can be neither Obedience nor Transgression.

Bur now this LAW (of Nature or Reason, eall it which you please) though it be more obscure and imperfect, yet is it no way contradictory to that clearer Light which God was pleased afterwards to Reveal. For if so, then we must either say, That Men had not a right Rule before, and, confequently,

were not bound to observe the Directions of it; or elfe, That the Nature of Moral Good and Evil is variable: Neither of which can be supposed with any Justice to our Wise and Holy Langiver and Judge, who notwithstanding the subsequent Revelations of his Will, hath still left us in many Things to the Guidance of this First Light. And if any one has prefum'd to maintain this extravagant Do-Etrine, That the Gospel supersedes the Law of Nature and right Reason, and that Divine Grace exempts Men from the Obligation to Good Works, he has run into very groß and dangerous Absurdities, and effectually confuted himself.

IT was a Tradition current among the James That the World should last Six I outfaid Years, which they divided into Thre able and equal Periods; reckoning the First from the Greation to the giving of the Lam by Mofes; the Second for the Continuance of that Law; and the Third, for the Days of the Melliah. Whence arose a Threefold Distinction of Church-Oeconomy, Patriarchal, Molaicah and Evangelicat.

THE PATRIARCHS liv'd under a THEORRACY; that is, the immediate Direction of GOD Himfelf, especially in extraordinary and difficult Cafes. The First Men being very long-lived, were not only Wife by abundance of Experience, but had like wife an Opportunity of Communicating their Wifdom

dom to many Thousands of the Younger Sort, by Personal Conversation. And so we may very justly suppose, That the frequent Appearances of Angels to them, the Visions and Revelations which God gave them, the miraculous Deliverances which he wrought for the Pious, and Judgments executed on the Wicked, were all preserv'd with great Truth and Exactness, for the First Two Thousand Years of the World, even supposing (what some Histories will not allow us to suppose) that no such Thing as Letters were yet Invented, or

apply'd to any Use.

OF the Politive Laws given in these Times, there are Two upon Record very Remarkable: The One, A Prohibition against eating of Blood, given to Noah after the Deluge, in these Words: Flesh with the Life thereof, which is the Blood thereof, shall you not eat. Which was reinforced under the Mofaick Institution b Concerning the Sense of which Words, there are various Opinions. The Modern Jews understand it to be, The cutting off a Limb or Piece of any Creature, and eating it while the Creature is yet alive, as some Americans are known to have done. But their more ancient Interpreters will have it, That hereby the Eating of Blood is univerfally forbidden, as that wherein the Life confisteth. And indeed, the parallel Place will not fuffer us to interpret otherwise. So the Apostles understood it;

Och. 9. 4. Lev. 17. 11, 14. Alls 15. 29.

and so did Tertullian, and Sulpitius Severus. And commonly the best Writers use Blood and Life indifferently for one and the fame Thing. The Reason of this Precept is partly Physical, Blood being too gross to afford proper Nutriment; but chiefly Moral, intimating to us, How carefully we should abstain from all Acts of

Revenge and Cruelty.

THE other Positive Law was Circumcision, injoyn'd by Mofes with fundry fevere Sanctions; but first given to Abraham, as a Seal of the. Covenant which God made with him in these Words: " This is my Covenant, which ye shall keep between Me and you, and thy Seed after thee: Every Man Child among you shall be Circumcifed. And ye shall Circumcise the Flesh of your Foreskin; and it shall be a Token of the Covenant betwixt Me and you. This was the Ratification of the Covenant which God made with Abraham, to accept of his Posterity for his own Inheritance and peculiar People, and that out of them should arise the promised Messiah. However, Circumcision was not so confin'd to the Holy Line of Isaac and Facob, but that other Branches of Abraham's Family, Ismael, and the Sons of Keturah, transmitted it to the great Nations fprung from them; whence the Saracens and Athiopians of Old, and the Mahometans at this Day are Circumcifed. And though none of the Nations in di Palestine, except only the Jews,

Tertull. Apolog. & de Monogamia. b De Jejunio. Gen. 17. 10, 11. d Fofeph. Antique Lib. viii. Cap. 4. used

51

used Circumcision, so that The Uncircumcised was a Term comprehending all their Neighbours round about; yet the Agyptians of Old receiv'd it of the Israelites sojourning among them; as may be gather'd from Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus, though they erroneously derive it from the Agyptians to the

Tews.

THAT Circumcision was properly a Sacrament, that is, not a bare External Sign, to diffinguish Men in a Civil Capacity, but fignificant of an Inward Spiritual Grace, is clear from feveral Passages relating to it, both in the Old and New Testament. In the Book of Deuteronomy. Moses endeavouring to persuade the People to a free and ingenuous Obedience of God's Laws. commands them to Circumcife the Foreskin of their Hearts. Jeremiah threatning the Jews, That they, tho' Circumcifed, should be punished with the Uncircumcifed, gives this Reason for it: d Because all the House of Israel are Uncircumcifed in the Heart. St. Stephen upbraiding them with their Unbelief and Hardness of Heart, and Cruelty to Christ and all the Prophets, calls them, " Uncircumcifed in Heart and Ears. And St. Paul having charged them with many grievous Crimes, which they committed in Confidence of their Election thro' Circumcision. concludes thus: f He is not a Jew which is one

outwardly;

Herodot. Euterpe. b Diodor. Sicul. Lib. 1. De Colchis. 5 Deut. 10. 16. de fer. 9. 25. Alts 7. 51. Rom. 11. 28, 29.

outwardly; neither is that Circumcision which is outward in the Flesh: But he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and Circumcision is that of the Heart, in the Spirit, and not in the Letter; whose Praise is not of Men, but of God. All which shews, what Opinion the more Pious and Intelligent among the Jens, had of their Circumcifion, that it oblig'd them to a most strict and holy Observance of the Divine Laws; that it was a Symbol of their Readiness to retrench the unlawful Defires and Affections of their Hearts. however painful and grievous it might be to

part with them.

IN the Accounts of the Patriarch's Religion. we find, That they did not fatisfie themselves with the inward Devotion of their Hearts, nor the Prayers and Praises of their Lips, how ferious and spiritual soever they might be; but they added Sacrifices of the best Things they had, to the other Acts of Worship. "Cain and Abel brought their Offerings to the LORD, one of the Fruits of the Ground, which he till'd; the other of the Flocks and Herds, which he kept. And though we read not of Noah's Sacrifice 'till his Thanksgiving b for Deliverance from the Flood, yet we need not hence conclude, That this was the First Time he or any other Pious Man ever built an Altar, or offered any Living Creature thereon. But, perhaps, we may from him derive the Custom

Gen 4. 3. 4. Selden de Jure Natura & Gentium, Lib. iii. which

which held many Ages after, of performing fuch folemn Devotions on Hills and eminent Places. Holy Scripture tells us. 2 That the Ark rested on the Mountains of Ararat: And other b grave Authors observe, That Mountainous Places were first inhabited by Mankind; either as being foonest dry, and fit for Pasture and Tillage; or because the Flood had struck such a Terror into the Sons of Noah, that they durst not trust themselves on the lower Ground, more subject to Inundations. This is certain, That Hebrews and Greeks, and most other Nations, had their Places for folemn Worship on the tops of Mountains. Abraham was commanded to Offer his Son Isaac for a Burnt-Offering upon one of the Mountains in the Land of Moriah. Balak the King of Moab, d took Balaam to the tops of Mountains, to facrifice to his Gods, and to curle Ifrael from thence. Hence it is that we read to often in the Books of Kings of High Plates, whither Men went up to worship, and that not only Idolaters, but those of the True Religion, even as e Samuel himfelf did, when he Anointed Saul to be King over Ifrael. In like manner, the Trojans facrificed upon Mount Ida, and the & Persians upon their Mountains. And both at Athens and Rome, their most Sacred Temples stood in the Highest Places of

were

^{*}Gen. viii. 4. b Plato, lib. iii. de Legibus. *Gen. xxii. 2.

*Numb. xxiii. *1 Sam. ix. 12, &c. *Hom. Iliad. x.

V. 170. *Xenophon. Cyropad, lib. viii.

their City. This universal Agreement of Mankind, in choosing the most eminent Places for their Religious Worship, is most reafonably derived from Noah and his Family, who, for the Reasons aforesaid, first erected their Altars in fuch Places.



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MOSAICAL Difpensation.

HE Great Minister of this Dispen-T Sation, was MOSES, a Prophet and Law-giver of the Jews, Son of Amram by Jochabed, born after his Sifter Miriam, and his Brother Aaron. About this Time the King of Ægypt, either appre-hending Danger from the prodigious Increase of the Children of Israel, or mov'd with the Predictions of his Priefts, a That a Man was ready to be Born into the World, who should be the Author of Ruin and Defolation to the Ægyptians, but bring Liberty and Glory to the Israelites; published an Edict, strictly commanding, That whenever the Hebrew Women

[.] Joseph Antig. Lib. ii. Cap. 5.

were deliver'd of a Male-Child, it should be cast into the River Nile, and drowned; and that whoever should presume to conceal such Children, both they and their whole Families should be put to Death. Now when Moses was born, his Mother Jochabed hid him three Months in her own House; but fearing she should be discovered, she put him in a little Boat of Bulrushes, daub'd over with Slime and Pitch, to keep out the Water, and laid it in the Flags by the River's Brink, in a Place where Thermuthis, the King's Daughter, used to Bathe her felf. This Princess coming, and finding the Child, was very much pleafed with him. His Sifter Miriam, appearing as one accidentally there, took upon her to call a Nurse, and call'd the Mother. By this means Moles had the Benefit of a noble Education, which, in conjunction with his great Natural Parts, and the special Assistance of the ALMIGHTY, qualified him for the many Wonderful Works he wrought afterwards. When he was about b Fourscore Years of Age, he led the Children of Israel out of Egypt, in order to conduct them to the Land of Canaan. This happened in the 43oth Year after Abraham came into Canaan, and in the 215th Year from Jacob's Descent into Egypt. So that when it is faid, a The Sojourning of the Children of Israel, who dwelt in Ægypt, was four hun-

c Joseph. Antiqu. Lib. ii. 2 Exod. ii. b Exod. vii. 7. Cap. 6. d Exod. xil. 40.

dred and thirty Tears; the Time is to be computed from the Beginning of Abraham's Pil-

grimage.

AFTER the People had travell'd about three a Months in the Wilderness, they came to Mount Sinai, where God at first had anpear'd to Mofes in a Flame of Fire in a Bush. This b Mountain (incomparably the highest in all that Country) appears dreadful and inaccessible to all that behold it; and it being an ancient Opinion, that God often came down upon it, it was held Sacred by the Inhabi-tants. To the top of this, Moses ascended, and continued there forty Days and forty Nights; in which Time he receiv'd Laws for the Government of the People both in Church and State, in Peace and War, from the immediate Dictates of God himself. These Laws the Jewish Doctors diftinguish into Moral, Ecclesiastical, and Political; which Distinction they will have to be intimated by those Words, frequently occurring in the Mofaick Writings, Laws, Statutes, and Judgments.

By LAWS they understand, the Moral Precepts, or Ten Commandments, written upon the two Tables of Stone with the Finger of

God.

BY STATUTES, Ceremonial Rites relating to Burnt-Offerings, Sacrifices, Purifications, and other Ecclesiastical Matters.

Joseph. Amiq. Lib. iii. Cap. 4. Exod. 19.

By JUDG MENTS, Political Laws and Ordinances for the Use of the Civil Magistrate, in the Administration of Justice, and deciding of Controversies between Man and Man.

THE Moral Law is obligatory to all Mankind, in all Ages and Countries of the World, being the Sum and Substance of that Original Law of Righteousness, ingraven at first on the Tables of Man's Heart; but being much obliterated and defac'd by the Fall, is now conceiv'd in express Words, and consign'd to Writing by the Supreme Judge, that Men may no longer plead Ignorance of their Duty. The Ecclesiastical and Civil Laws of the Jews were of a different Nature, binding them not as they were Men, but as a particular Church and People; and so they were not of an Eternal, but Temporary Obligation.

dow of good Things to come, and that there was a Necessity it should be changed, he is to be understood of the Ecclesiastical or Ceremonial Law; which, he teaches us, was abolished and done away in Christ. But when he says, By the Deeds of the Law there shall no Flesh be justified, this is true even of the Moral Law; which however perfect in its self, yet cannot be so compleatly sulfilled by any Man in this stall State, as to acquit him of all Sin in God's Sight. However, we Christians

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never delighted in luch Worthippers; he ne-

^{*} Heb. x. 1, vii. 12. B Rom. iii. 20, Rom. iii. 31,

do not make void this Law, but we own its binding Force upon us, and establish it

among us.

But the Ceremonial Law is now abrogated fince the Coming of Christ, yet we are not to think that any Part of it was a inftituted without good Reason; tho' fuch Reafon may be so buried in the Dust of Antiquity, as that it may pass our Skill, at this Distance, to discover it. So much of it as we well understand, we find to be Rational. and worthy of its Divine Founder; and therefore 'tis but fit we believe the fame of what we don't understand. 'Tis highly absurd to imagine, that God would have tied up this People to fuch a strict Observance of these Laws, that they might not add nor diminish a tittle, if any of them had been without good Reason. God is the Fountain of Wisdom and Reason; his very Nature forbids us to afcribe any thing to him, much less any Law or Ordinance, which is irrational. It was the peculiar Character of Pagan Ceremonies, that they were groundless and senseless, and not only obscure and unaccountable, but had all the Signs of fanatick Rage and Madness in them; the Prince of Darkness taking a Pleafure in abusing the Folly of Mankind, and holding them in the most abandon'd and deplorable Slavery. But the God of Wisdom never delighted in fuch Worshippers; he ne-

^{*} Spenter de Legibus Heb. P. 4.

CHAP.VIII. CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

ver was pleas'd with the Sacrifice of Fools. The wifelt and best of his Servants, who have been most conversant in the Study of his Laws, have highly applauded them for their wife and excellent Contrivance. Behold (fays Mofes; in some of his last Words to the People of Ifrael) I have taught you Statutes and Judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me, that ye (bould do fo, in the Land whither you go to posses it: Keep therefore; and do them; for this is your Wisdom and your Understanding in the Sight of the Nations, which shall hear all these Statutes and say; Surely this great Nation is a wife and understanding People: For what Nation is there fo great; who hath God so nigh unto them; as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what Nation is there so great, that hath Statutes and Judgments so righteous, as all this Law which I fer before you this Day? And David, who studied them Day and Night, gives the like high Encomium of them. The Law of the Lord b is perfect, converting the Soul: the Testimony of the Lord is sure, making wife the Simple: The Statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the Heart i the Commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightning the Eyes. The Fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the Judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogethers

THE Modern Jews divide their Laws and Ceremonies into three Ranks or Orders. The First of which, contains all the Precepts of

Deut, iv. 5, Gr. b Pfal. xix. 7.

the written Law, comprised in the Five Books of Moles. The Second, those of the Oral Law, which are the Traditions collected by their Rabbins, and feveral Conflictutions, which they call the Commandments of the wife Men, fet down in the Book they call the Talmud. The Third. Sort contains those Things which Use and Custom have authorized at divers Times, and in different Places, which they call Customs. Of these, the Two first are generally receiv'd by all the Jews, tho' dispersed thro' all Parts of the World: But as to the Customs, they are different according to the feveral Places where they dwell. Their whole Worship consists only in Reading the Law, and certain Prayers they make in their Synagogues; for they have no Priesthood among them, nor Place for Sacrifices fince the Destruction of the Temple at Jerusalem. They hold Seven Principal Articles of Faith.

I. THAT God is One, Incorportal and Eternal. II. THAT this God alone is to be worshipped. III. THAT there have been, and may fill be Prophets:

IV. THAT Moses was the greatest Prophet, that was ever inspired by God; and that the Law be left, was dictated by God in all its Precepts:

V. THAT the said Law is immutable; that

nothing can be added to it, or taken from it.

VI. THAT the Messiah is to come, who shall be more Powerful than all the Kings of the Earth.

VII. THAT God (ball raise the Dead at the end of Time; and that there shall be an Universal Judgment. UPON

Upon their Crucifixion of our Blessed Lord, their Church and State were presently disfolved, and they carried Captives into all Nations; among whom they are look'd upon as Objects of Divine Vengeance to this Day; having never been able to recover their Country, or remove that general Aversion which all the rest of the World have for them. In the Reign of the Emperor Adrian, they attempted a Restauration, under the Conduct of Barchochebas; but this Attempt failing, their Condition became more desperate and hopeless. They have fince endeavour'd to make themselves independent, but could never accomplified. None of them are in any military Office, nor any ways dignified in the State; but are Bankers, Usurers, Custom-House Men, Brokers, Druggists, Interpreters, &. We have several Decrees of Councils, Rescripts of Emperors, and Edicts of Princes against them. To relate how often they have been expell'd France, England, and Spain, would be too tedious a Digression; and therefore I forbear, and proceed now to the Evangelical Dispensation, or the Glorious Light of the Gofpel.





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CHRISTIAN RELIGION.



UR REDEMPTION by JESUS CHRIST, from whom we are denominated Christians, leads us to reflect on the miserable State

we were in before, and by what Means we were involv'd in it;

In the Account which the Holy Scripture gives of our First Parents, we are told, that God placed them in a delightful Garden, and gave them leave to eat freely of the Fruit of every Tree, except only the Tree of the Knowlege of Good and Evil; Of which, fays he, thou Shalt not eat: For in the Day that thou eatest thereof, thou halt surely die.

IT is a frivolous Cavil, which fome have rais'd against this Method, which God took for the Tryal of Man's Obedience; that he should forfeit all his own and his Descendents Happiness by the earing of an Apple, as they love lightly to express it. But they may with

CHAP. IX. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 63

as much Reason (and indeed they often do with equal Boldness) arraign the Wisdom of God, in the Institution of the Sacraments, or any positive Act of Divine Worship. For some of which they cannot find such a Reason in the Nature of Things, as they may for this: It being very agreeable, that Man, who in his original State, was to be nourished by the Fruit of the Trees, should, for the Tryal of his Obedience, be forbid to taste of some One of them.

But this Prohibition was foon broke through, and confequently the Penalty annex'd to it, was incurr'd. Man loft the Bleffing of Immortality, and became subject to the Dominion of Death. For fo we must necessarily understand the Commination, In the Day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die; not by an immediate Separation of Soul and Body, for that happen'd not to him till feveral hundreds of Years after, but by becoming liable to Pains and Difeases, and gradual Decays, which should at last end in Death. In this Sense we must interpret the Words, while we take them to fignify the Diffolution of the human Frame, which from hence we infer, would never have been dissolv'd, if the Condition of Obedience had constantly been perform'd.

Rebel against God, and consequently made themselves obnoxious to his Curse, which was Death, it remains for us to consider, how far this Curse is to be extended, and whether it

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affected the Nature of Man in whole or in part: whether the actual Offenders only fuffer'd by it, or whether the whole Species or

Progeny be comprehended in At. Svinley van

SOME there are who contend, that the Sin of our First Parents was merely Personal, and that their Posterity is in no Sense guilty of it. nor answerable for it. But the undeniable Effects and Confequences, force us to explode this Affertion. For if eyer a perfect Freedom from Pains and Death was the Privilege of our Nature, we have certainly loft it, by the Experience of all Generations, who have been always subject to these Miseries, even in the State of Infancy and Childhood, before they were capable of committing any personal or actual Sin. Now the Punishment being thus obvious and clear, the Original Guilt of the first Transgression must be necessarily supposed to cleave to every individual Person; otherwise it would be but agreeable to the Laws of Justice, that every Child of Man should be permitted to grow up, till he became an actual Offender; which is not done; and therefore it must be some Original Sin, antecedent to all we can think of, but the first of our Kind, which has thus entail'd Pains and Death upon the whole Race, in all Ages and Parts of the World.

SOME again will allow no more to be intended by the Curfe, than a Condition of Mortality, with the Difeases and Calamities incident thereunto. They grant indeed, that when when a Man comes to act for himself, he is accountable for his Actions in a future State, and that if they be criminal, they must be expiated some Way or other, or else they will bring him to certain insernal Punishments prepared for ungodly Men: But as for Original Sin, they think the Guilt of it pursues a Man no farther than the Grave; that when he once arrives there, the Sentence of Divine Justice is satisfied in this Particular, and the Soul stands in no need of any farther Expiation or Atonement for it.

This Principle is chiefly advanced by Quakers, who use no Baptism at all, and by Anabaptists, who deny it to Infants and little Children. That they may not feem to neglect their Salvation, they affert, that nothing wants to be done to fuch Innocents, who have not attain'd to the Knowledge of Good and Evil; that having never done any thing to offend God, they will, by Virtue of their own Innocence, be received to his Mercy. Hereupon they very much lessen the noxious Influence of Original Sin, and tragically aggravate the Cruelty of that Sentence, which leaves such tender Souls to a miserable State in another World. Let us fee what Defence there is in Scripture and Reason for such Sentiments.

AND first, nothing can be more true than this, that Children are not naturally and by Birth-right, Heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven. Even the first Man himself, in his most Perfect State, had no Title to this Kingdom.

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For he could not have it, except God his Creator had youchfafed to give it him. But we can find no Foundation for fuch Title in the first Covenant: His highest Privilege here specified, was to be Lord of this lower World, And tho' God might have translated Men when multiplied upon Earth, to Heavenly Habitations, as he did Enoch and Elias, yet this had been an Act of his own free Grace, 'tis no express Article of his Covenant with Mankind; how much less can any such Privilege be affum'd or challenged by his Posterity, in this fallen accurfed State? But now if the Souls of Children, which are the most essential and considerable Part of Man. should by Virtue of their own Innocence, be admitted into Heaven, after a few Days, or Months, or Years Conjunction with the Body. that Death which dissolves the Conjunction, would be so far from being a Curse, that it would be the Occasion of a higher Degree of Happiness, than Man in his greatest Perfection could ever naturally aspire to. domin view

But, secondly, The Holy Scriptures do abundantly testifie, that the Souls of Men, as well as their Bodies, are tainted and corrupted by Original Sin; that there is no Man living, tho' never so just, but he sinneth often; that the Imaginations of Man's Heart are evil continually; that they who are in the Flesh, cannor please God; and except we be Regenerate and Born again, we cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. These Testimonies, joyn'd with with our own Reason and Experience, put it out of all Doubt, that we are monstrously degenerated in spiritual Things, from that original Righteousness, that sound and clear Judgment, that Rectitude of Will and Affections, which is said to have been in our First Parents.

THERE is visibly a strong Biass upon our Nature to that which is Evil; it discovers it felf in Children as foon as they begin to act; they prefently fall of their own accord, and without a Tutor, to the commission of many Vices; whereas much Time and Pains is beflow'd upon them to bend them the other Way, and conform their Minds to the Practice of that which is Good. This evidently shews, That Vice is the native Product of their Souls; that the Seeds of it are ingenerated in them, which want nothing but Time in the tenderest Infant, to ripen them and bring them forth into Action. Hence it is that the Church teaches, confonantly to the Meaning of Holy Scripture, that Adam's Sin brought a Curse upon his whole Offspring as well as himfelf, and that the Death threatned, affects the Soul as well as the Body, both in this World and that which is to come; which tho' it be not the Annihilation or Extinction of the Soul, yet is properly styled Death, in as much as it separates the Soul from the Presence and Love of God, who is the Fountain of Life, and Health, and Comfort. Every Child of Man therefore is naturally under the Sentence of Spiritual and Eternal, aoissa

Eternal, as well as Temporal Death. This is the fad and deplorable State, which all Man-kind by Nature are in, deriving the Seeds of Sin from their first Parents, and bringing forth the Fruits of it when they come to Ripenels of Years, in all kinds of Impiety and Iniquity. by

reason of this Original Sin.

But the Man had thus utterly loft his own Righteoushess, and subjected himself to the Slavery of Sin and Satan, yet God did not caft him off for ever, as he justly might have done, but was pleased to find out an Expedient, whereby his own Justice might be satisfied, and the Offender deliver'd from the Curfe of the Law; and that was, by fending his only Begotten Son into the World, to take our Nature upon him, and in our Stead to fulfil the whole Law of God, by the perfect Obedience of his holy Life, and by the infinite Merit of his precious Blood, fhed for the Propitation of our Sins.

By virtue of this Propitiation it is, that Infants being baptized, and dying in their Infancy, are purified from the Guilt of Original Sin, restored to the Grace and Mercy of God, admitted into the Number of his adopted Children, to be Inheritors of his heavenly Kingdom. And likewife adult Perfons, who in Word or Deed fin after their Baptism, if they truly repent, and unfeignedly believe the Holy Gospel, they are absolved by this all-sufficient Sacrifice, and no Stain remains upon them that shall be imputed to their Condem-

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nation. This which Jefus Christ hath thus done and obtain'd for us, is commonly call'd, The

Work of our Redemption.

An p whereas, before the coming of Christ, the Church of God was then consin'd to one particular Place and Nation, which was the Jews, and their Temple at Jerusalem, Jesus Christ has, without Respect of Nations or Persons, call'd all People into his Church, to partake of the Blessings of his Gospel: So that every Rational Creature under Heaven, Jew or Gentile, Master or Servant, Noble or Ignoble, yielding Homage, Obedience, and Worship to him, is equally accepted of him: And his Church is Catholick; that is, the Congregation of Christian People wheresever dispersed over the Face of the whole Earth.

AND for the People which make up this Congregation, they are denominated The Faithful, from their professing of Christ, and partaking of his Word and Sacraments in the due Preaching and Administration of them. Hereby all those Assemblies are excluded from the Church, among whom the Word is not preach'd nor the Sacraments administer'd in due manner, and by proper Perfors, as Christ hath appointed. For Christ, as the Head of the Church, hath appointed both Perfons and Rules for the good Government of it, and left strict Injunctions for the perpetual Observance of them, as well knowing, that the Ruin of any Society, Ecclefiaffical or Civil, begins in the Breach of Union and good Order. And therefore

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fore we conclude, That where ever there are two feparate Affemblies of Christians, work shipping Christ, in such different Ways, that they cannot Unite and Communicate one with another, one of them cannot be the true Church of Christ, because Christ is our Common Head, and his Members, like those of the Natural Body, have Fellowship one with another; they mutually fuccour, help, and comfort one another, which they cannot do in a separated and divided State. He came to purchase unto himself a peculiar People, zealous of Good Works, and therefore not zealous against one another, not envying at, and striving with one another; for where Envy and Strife is, there is Confusion and every evil Work. The Bonds which he left to hold his Member's together, were Meekness and Gentleness, Love and Condescension, a Forbearing and Forgiving Spirit, which for the fake of Peace and Concord will dispense with many Things which are not fo well as they should be, and not forfake the Flock of Christ, because there are some Goats, some unworthy Members in it; remembring, that the Church is compar'd to a Fisher's Ner, which caught all manner of Fish, good and bad; and to a Field wherein there grew Tares as well as Wheat, and were order'd to grow together untill the Harvest, which is the End of the World.

CHRIST hath appointed his Church as the only Way to Eternal Life. In this he promiseth to be with his Servants to the End of CHAP. IX. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 71 the World. In this he diffeenfeth all the Graces of Justification, Adoption, and Sanctification. The Righteousness of Christ, which is our Justification, can no more be convey'd to us out of his Mystical Body the Church than the Vital Heat and Animal Spirits of the Natural Body can be communicated to a Limb or Part which is separated from it. We cannot become the adopted Sons of God, except we be admitted into his Family, which is the Church: We cannot attain to the Inheritance of his Heavenly Kingdom, except we continue in this Family. So neither can we be Partakers of the fanctifying Virtue of the Holy Ghost, except we abide in the Church; for upon this it is, that Christ promised to fend down his Spirit; which he bestows not but by certain Means, as Prayers, Preaching, and the Administration of the Sacraments, as he did even in the Apostles Times, according to the Accounts we have of them in the Acts of the Apostles, and which are therefore styled The Means of Grace. We read, That at the first, the Holy Ghost was communicated to Believers, by the Preaching and Laying on of the Apostles Hands, but of none other; And, That the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved; which plainly argues. That there was no Salvation out of the Church. An editio engil in on a basua

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not be altered but by the Authority which first established it. For Christ, who gave it, has declared, That it shall continue to the End of the World. Therefore we conclude, That that Church alone which first began at Jerusalem on Earth, will bring us to the Jerusalem in Heaven; and that alone began there, which always imbraceth the Faith once deliver deto the Saints. Whatever Church pretendeth to a new Beginning, pretendeth at the same Time to a new Church or Religion; and whatever is so New, is in Effect none.

IT is ftrange that any who call themselves Christians, should choose that which was anciently efteem'd the greatest Punishment on this fide Hell: I mean, to be out of the Church? To be cast out by Anathema's and Excommunis tations, was once thought very dreadful, how ever fuch Cenfures are now flighted, and reputed but as fo many bruta fulmina. And fure Hereticks and Schifmaticks, who cut them felves off by their own voluntary Act, are not in a better Condition. But let them rememiber, That while Noah, by God's Direction, was preparing his Ark, he was ridicul'd and flouted at by the impious World; 'till the Deluge came, and swept all away that were left out of it. Now that Ark was always reputed a Type or Figure of the Church, and the Application is easie: As many as are out of the Church, are in the same State of Perdition.

THE Christian Church is built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, IESUS CHRIST Himfelf being the Chief Corner Stone who though he was to the Tems a Stone of Stumbling and a Rock of Offence, vet that happen'd not for want of fufficient Evidence of his Divine Authority for Nicodemia freely professes for himself and many others' 2 Rabbi well know that thou artain Teacher some from God ! for no Man can do shefe! Miracles that thou doft; except God be with bim. Nor was he guilty of any misconduct, writed a ditions Attempts against the Civil Government, as the false Christs were; for he both paid Tribute Himfelf, and exhorted others to do the fame of informuch what Pilate declaredo That he could find no Fault in him so But the Fers Diffatisfaction about him proceeded from their own gross Corruptions, and false Notions of the Meffiah, whom they expected to appear among them with great Pomb and Grandeur, to deliver them from the Roman Yoke, and make them a Free Reople, whehas they had much more need of fuch a Saviour as could reform their foul Errors, both in Faith and Manners; and could not in Reason hope (if they had not been fatally blinded) that God hould deliver them from that Stare of Servitude to which he had fubjected themo for the Putishment of their Sins, before they had put away those Sins from among their

Matte i. 21.

[·] John iii, 2.

and return'd to a due Acknowledgment and Observance of the Divine Laws. Now such a Savious was I Esus CHRIST, according to what the Angel foretold of him. when he gave Directions about his Name : * Thou (halt call his Name JESUS, for he foull fave his People from their Sins. And therefore notwithstand ing the Hard-heartedness of the Jews, and the Opposition of the Gentile World for a Time, fuch was the intrinsick Goodness of Christ's Doctrine, that it made its way thro all fiery Ervals, and fanguinary Perfecutions which were raifed against it by the Malice of wicked Men and Devils. It minister'd un freakable Comforts to the first Professors of it. fo that they fuffer'd the most ignominious and painful Deaths with Pleasure, and were so far from thinking themselves unhappy under the Afflictions they indured for Christ, that they rejoyced in that they were counted worthy to fuffer for his Name : they took joyfully the fpoiling of their Goods; they indured Bonds and Imprisonment, not accepting Deliverance. reckoning, That thefe light Afflictions, which indane that for a Moment, wrought for them a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory. Jefus Christaid to have brought Life and Immortality to light through the Goffel; in comparison of which our present Condition deferves not the Name of Life; and therefore herfuys, Whofoever will fave his Life, foull tofe it;

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Matte i. 21,

but who foever shall lose his Life for my sake and the Goffel, the fame shall find it. He hath open'd the Kingdom of Heaven to all Believers, fo that now we have a clear Prospect of the Glories of another World; and all the Martyrs and Confessors have seen with an Eye of Faith, what St. Stephen beheld with his bodily Eyes, the Heavens open'd, and Jesus standing on the Right Hand of God : which Glorious View of approaching Happinels, ealily induced him to forgive his Perfecutors, who haften'd him (tho' undefignedly) to the Injoyment of it. rive of this Hand, deferibes to

I r we have any just Value for this great Salvation, which Christ hath purchased for us, and revealed to us, we shall be willing to have the Apostles and first Preachers of it in everlasting Remembrance. We can do no less in Graticude, than testifie a singular Respect for those, who under God have been the Instruments of so much Good to us: Especially when we confider that they have been fuch great Benefactors to us, not with Ease to themselves, but with the severest Labours, Difficulties and Perfecutions, which have commonly ended in the loss of their Lives. It is therefore very unbecoming us, who by their Ministry have been called out of Darkness into the marvellous Light of the Gofpel, to refuse them grateful Commemorations on this Account, when at the same time, God is so far from being robbed of any Honour by fuch Commemorations, that they do mightily contribute to his Glory, and to the Maintenance of true Religion and Virtue amongst us.

ries of another World; and all the Marris and W F of this Nation have abundant Cause to be thankful to God for the first Planters of Christianity among us. For if we examine the Religion and Manners of our Forefathers, we shall discover in them a Degree of Idolatry and Barbarity more wretched than was commonly to be found in the Gentile World. Gildas , a Native of this Island, describes to what Excesses their Ignorance and Superstition carried them: "That they were over-" grown with the common Errors of the " Pagan World: that their Idols were as " monstrous and extravagant, and altogether " as numerous, as those in Agypt." Which indeed were fo gross, that they moved the Indignation of an b Idolater himself, who thus discharges his Choler upon them. nertw villeis

fuch great Benedators to us, not with File to Quis nescit, Volusia Bithynice, qualia demens Agyptus portenta colat ? Crocodilon adorat ... Pars hac: illa pavet faturam ferpentibus Ibim, &c.

therefore very unbecoming us, who by the How Agopt, mad with Superstition grown, Makes Gods of Monsters, but too well is known. One Sect Devotion to Nile's Serpent pays; Others to Ibis, that on Serpents preys.

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b Juvenal, Sat. IV. W. Fish-* Hift. p. 10.

Fish-Gods you'll meet, with Fins and Scales o'ergrown;

Diana's Dogs ador'd in every Town, Her Dogs have Temples, but the Goddes none.

'Tis mortal Sin an Onion to devour; Each Clove of Garlick is a facted Pow'r, &c.

THE same Gildas assures us, That the de-form'd and hideous Figures of British Idols were to be seen in his Time. What he relates, is supported by a Passage of St. Jerom, in his Epistle to Heliodorus: "That the whole "World, from India to Britain, and from the cold Climates of the North, as far as the a Atlantick Ocean, were funk almost to the a Condition of Beafts and Infects, and liv'd " a wretched and contemptible Life. For " in Truth, a Man that's ignorant of Him "that made him, is upon the matter no bet-"ter than a Brute." Julius Cafar, who invaded this Island about Fifty Years before the Birth of Christ, informs us, That the Druds, who were the British Priests, in Cases of great Mortality and publick Distress, endeavour'd to obtain Deliverance by Human Sa-crifice, which they offer'd thus: They took Ofiers, and made large hollow Figures of their Idols. Into these they put such as were doom'd to be made the Sacrifice, who were

De Bell Gall, lib. vi. od 1

commonly Thieves and Robbers or some other scandalous Criminals, imagining, that fuch Wretches were most acceptable to their Deities: But in case there was not a sufficient Number of fuch, they icrupled not to supply the Deficiency with such as were Innocent. Thefe. Victims they made fast within the wicker Statues of their Idols, and then fet Fire to them, and burn'd them to Death. This is farther confirmed by Tacitus, who writes. That when Suctionius Paulinus was Nero's General in Britain, the Druids in the Ille of Anglesey, used to facrifice those they took Priloners, and butcher Men and Women, to inspect their Intrails, for finding out the Success and Events of Things. This gave Occasion to another Roman Author, b to style them Britannos holbitibus feros, Cruel to Strangers, in regard to this horrible Custom of flay-I hus we know that we were sometime

Gentiles carried away unto these dumb Idols: That we facrificed unto Devils, not to God s Having our Understanding darkened; being alie-nated from the Life of God, through the Ignorance that was in us. And we are fure that this Darkness was dispell'd by the Glorious Beams of that Sun of Righteousness, of whom it was prophelied, that he should inlighten the Gentiles; that the Isles should wait for him, and

Annal L xiv. Her. Corm. lib. III. od. iv. xii. 2. d 1 Cor. x. 20. Epbef. iv. 18. Offa 1x. 9.

bring their Sons and their Daughters to the Name of the Lord God of Ifrael; that the abundance of the Sea * should be converted to him, and the Sons of Strangers joyn themfelves to the Lord. And though we cannot assign the particular Year, or the Instrument of our Conversion, yet we are affured from ancient Writers of the best Credit, b That a Christian Church was planted in Britain, within the Compass of the Apostolick Age. And fome of our own most Learned Writers have made it probable, that the great Apostle of the Gentiles, St. Paul, was the Instrument of conveying this inestimable Bleffing to us. In Memory of which, 'tis faid, the great Cathedral in London, supposed formerly to have been a Temple of Diana, was dedicated to the Honour of St. Paul, being the only Cathedral in any Metropolis in Christendom, which bears the Name of that Apostle. The World we soons

AS the Christian Faith was planted here by an eminent Hand, so it prosper'd and flourished more than in many other Parts of the World. And if our History of King Lucius be true, who is said to have Reign'd here about One Hundred and Fourscore Years after Christ, then our Nation is the first which had the Church established in it by the Publick Authority and Approbation both of Prince and People. However, this is certain, that Constanting the

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And though this Holy Religion has undergone many Religies among us, by the Contempt and Prophaneness of the Old Britains, the Perfections of invading Danes and Saxons, while they were Infidels, and the gross Errors and Corruptions of the Church of Rome, yet God has still been pleased to repair and restore it, by the Labours of Men singularly eminent for Piecy and Learning, especially in these later Days; so that it now shines among us in its Native Splendor and Beauty.

A wolf we consider, not only the future and invisible, but even the present manifest Blessings which this Religion hath brought along with it; how it hath been attended with the Advancement of Human Learning, and the Improvement of all useful Arts and Sciences, whereby Ignorance and Barbarity have no longer a Being among us; but the British Nation is exalted in Wealth and Glory above cothers which were once superior to her. This shuft convince us what infinite Reasons we thave to be thankful to God for it, and how much it is our Temporal as well as Spiritual Interest, to retain it amongst us, and hold it fast for ever.

of the State of Religion in other Countries; how the Sifter Churches in the East, but little older than ours, have been destroy'd several Ages ago, by that possonous but spreading Root

Root of Mahometanism; how strangely the Face of Christianity is deformed, and the Power of it decay'd, in those Places which still retain the Name of it, we must joyfully confess, That we of this Church are Happy above all other

Churches in Christendom,

We do not pretend, that any Church is Infallible and absolutely Perfect, and therefore not ours: but this we dare affirm, and can justifie, That if we take our Measures concerning the Truths of Religion, from the Rules of the Holy Scripture, and the Platform of the Primitive Churches, the Church of England is undoubtedly, both as to Doctrine and Worfhip, the Purest that is at this Day in the World.

of the Vocation wherewith we are called. Being forichly planted and water'd, let us not prove like the Prophet's Vineyard, and bring forth nothing but a few wild Grapes; but let the Goodness of our Lives, bear some reasonable Proportion to that of our Religion. And let us not be Children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every Wind of Doctrine, by the Sleight of Men, and cunning Craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deteive: But let us hold fast the Profession of our Faith without wavering.

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Name of it, we must joyintly coniefs, of this Chuch at Art Dove at Churches in Christenda O

The AIM of MAN, and its Bleffed Rules of Ray IN LASS after

HE grand Objection against Religion is, that there is no Benefit or Advantage arising from it, but that all the Changes and Chances of Life, good or bad, happen alike to all Meri; that shere as one Event to the Righteous, and to the Wicked, to him that facrificeth, and to him that facrificeth pot : as is the Good, fo is the Sinner; and be that sweareth, as he that feareth an Oath. Nay, sometimes a Man's Piety is his Bane and Ruin in this World, exposing him to the Lois of his Peace, his Friends, his Estate, and his very Life it self, as it com-monly fared with the Primitive Christians, which made St. Paul pronounce of them, that if in this Life only they had Hope, they were of all Men the most miserable. It has been further ob-

Pecle ix. 2.

ferv'd, that many a Man, not with standing the Excellency of his Nature, his Religion and Virtue, hath been in worse Circumstances with Respect to the present State, than sundry Species of Brute Animals, who are much freer from Pains and Diseases, from afflicting Cares and Sorrows, have a much truer Tafte and Enjoyment of bodily Pleasures, and continue in the Fruition of them many Years longer than the Lives of feveral Men put together, tho' they should all be extended to the common Period. It would be difficult to fatisfie these Objections, without referring to a future State of Rewards and Punishments, wherein the Mysteries of Providence shall be unfolded, and the present Inequality of its Dispensations adjusted. For to say, that all Mankind is involved in Mifery by means of the first Transgression and Forseiture of Happinels; fo that whatever the best of Men suffers, he justly suffers at the Hands of God, is very true indeed; but yet it doth not fatisfie the Question, why wicked Men should have a greater Portion of earthly Felicity, than those who truly fear and love God? For, if this World be the only Place wherein Man shall have a Being, we must either say, that God is not a just and wife Judge, in dealing our the present Bleffings and Curses so very disproportionably to Men's Deferts; or elfe, that he excercises no Judgment at all, ais no ways concern'd in all the Good or Evil that happens in the World: But to affirm either of thefe.

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is to elpouse as gross and damnable an Error, as any Sect of Philosophers, or Heresie among

Christians, was ever guilty of

- NEITHER Will it much mend the Matter to fay, that Calamities are fent upon Good Men, for the Exercise of their Virtue, which the Stoicks mightily harangued upon. The Exercife of Parience, Meekness, Gentleness, and all other Virtues, is doubtless of the highest Importance to a Man, because he is now only in a State of Probation, and shall e'er long be transplanted to another World, where he shall be made perfect, and be for ever deliver'd from the Society of malicious Men, and from all other Temptations which are at present requisite to excite his Devotion, and often fend him to God his mighty Helper and Deliverer. But without fuch a Prospect as this to what End Thall a Man exert and blazon his Virtues, especially by Sufferings Can he flatter himself, that he shall be able by the Influence of his great Exsimple, to put Vice out of Countenance, and make it fly into the most fecret Corners of the World; togain the Victory over Oppression and wrongful Dealing, and inthrone Juffice, Charity, and Goodness in the Hearts of all Men? I confess this single Delign of doing so much Service to the World, would be worthy the utmost Endeavours of a brave Man, even tho he could expect no Recompence hereafter for fuch his Beneficence. But alas! the Expevience of almost fix thousand Years has fully affured us, that the united Wildom of Religion

gion and Philosophy, the most lovely Patterns of Goodness in every Kind, the severest Pulnishments and noblest Rewards, lrightly dispensed by the Hand of uncorrupt Justice; in short, all the Frowns and Favours, Promises and Threatnings, Terrors and Incouraged ments of God and Man, have never yet been able, to prevail so far, as to bring over the greater Part of Mankind to the Cause of Religion and Virtue; but the bad Men have always out-number'd the Good, and the Devil has maintain'd the Style which the Gospel allows him, of being the Prince and God of this World.

SO that which Way foever we confider these things, we shall never be able to give a rational Answer to the Objections against the prefent Dispensarions of Providence, nor find fufficient Incouragements and Punishments for good and bad Men, unless we have recourse to the different States in the other World, which we call Heaven and Hell. Which are indeed Matters of Faith, but yet fo univerfally believ'd by all Nations of the World! however differing in Religion, or in their Notions of these Places, that we must be infusferable Scepticks, if we should go about to dispute the Certainty of them, even tho' we had no more than the common Confent of Mankind to ground our Faith upon. But here we have the superabundant Authority of Holy Scriptures to put us our of all doubt that our Bodies, after they have been demolified by the Power of the Grave, and reduc'd company

duc'd into Earth according to the primitive Malediction, shall be revived again, and become the Habitations of the fame Soul and Spirit which now informs them, and appear before the Judgment-Seat of Chrift, that every Man may receive according to that which he hath done in the Body, whether it be Good. or whether it be Evil. They that have done Good shall go into Life everlasting, and they that have done Evil into everlasting Fire. These Things are formuch inculcated in Holy Scripture, that they cannot escape the Notice of the most incurious and thoughtless Person. To begin with the first of these. Christ's coming into the World, was on Purpose to open the Kingdom of Heaven to all Believers: His Preaching was in order to fit Men for his Kingdom: His most pressing Exhortations to them with any thing, with Estate, with Limbs, with mortal Life it felf, rather than be withheld by these from entering into it. In this Kingdom he promifes to reward his Servants for all that they have done and fuffer'd for his Sake. Hither he ascended, forty Days after his Refurrection, in the Presence of his Disciples, after he had comforted them with Asfurances that he was going before them, to prepare a Place for them in this Kingdom, and then would come again and receive them to himself, that they might reign with him for ever. At the fame time that he rose from the Grave, he raised up other Bodies also, to accompany company him in his triumphant Ascension; and hath told us, that at the Resurrection to Life everlasting, he will change our vile Body, that it may be fashioned like unto his own glorious Body, according to the mighty working, whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself. From this glorious Kingdom he shew'd himself to St. Stephen at his Marryrdom, causing him to rejoyce and triumph in his Sufferings for his Name.

THEN Happy, for ever Happy, are those who have run the short Race that is fet before them, and obtained the Crown, and are admitted into the City of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem; where Eye hath not feen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it entred into the Heart of Man to conceive, the Things which GOD hath prepared for them that love him! into the blisful Presence of God the Judge of All, to Jefus the Mediator of the new Covenant, to an innumerable Company of Angels and Arch-Angels, Cherubins dand Seral phines, Thrones and Dominions, Principalities and Powers; to the general Affembly and Church of the First-born;

to the glorious Company of the Apoftles, the goodly Fellowship of the Prophets, the noble Army of Martyrs, and to an innumerable Train of Holy Men and Women, standing before the Throne, and before the Lamb, cloathed with white Robes and Palms in their Hands, crying with a loud Voice, Salvation to our God! Hofannah in the Highest! finging eternal Halle-Rejubs to him that litteth on the Throne, and to the Lamb for Ever and Ever! galvill and to the Lamb for Ever

FROM hence it is, that the Apostles teach us to fetch Confolation in all Troubles and Dia freses, looking unto Jesus the Author and Pinisher of our Faith; considering, that if we fuffer with him, we shall also reign with him; and reckoning that this present Life is but a Val pour, a Shadow which passeth away and cometh not again; that the Afflictions of it are but momentary, and by no means comparable to that exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory, which shall shortly be revealed to us. Finally, St. John. hath given us a Description of this Kingdom in his Revelation, so far as Heavenly Things are capable of being described by Earthly Patterns, representing to us the Glorious Light of it, infinitely OI

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infinitely beyond that of our Sun; the excellent Government of it; being under the immediate Administration of God himself, and nothing at all molested by wicked Men or Devils; the bleffed State of its Inhabitants. who are all crown'd and adorn'd in the most folendid Manner, living together in the most exact Unity and Friendship, serving the Almighty with perfect Joy and Gladness, affected with no Sense of Pain or Sorrow, knowing no want of any Thing that is good, but abounding in all Things that are worthy their Enjoyment, or can contribute to their Happinels. With respect to this Kingdom it is, that we are faid to have no continuing City here, to be Strangers and Pilgrims upon Earth, to be Sons of God and joint Heirs with Christ; to be dead to the World, and alive unto God. thro Jefus Christ; with whom our Life is hid, with whom at his fecond Appearing, we shall also appear in Glory. Surely God would never have made these Things so great a Part of his facred Word, if he had not intended, that we should not only believe there is such a Place as Heaven, but likewise fix it very much in our Thoughts, and heartily apply our felves to the Means whereby we may atrive to it.

THE Kingdom of Heaven is (through the

THE Kingdom of Heaven is (through the Merits of Christ, which must always be understood) attainable by all Men. The Scripture affirms, that God is no Respecter of Persons, nor confines his Grace and Love to any Nation or Order of Men. And whereas

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the Jews of old were the peculiar People of God, now says St. Paul, in CHRIST JESUS there is neither Greek nor Jew, Circumcisson nor Uncircumcifion, Barbarian, Scythian, Bond nor Free, but Christ is all, and in all. A Man's Nation or worldly Circumstances do not incapacitate him from becoming a Member of this Kingdom. Formerly, indeed, Riches and a high Station in the World were great Impediments; our Lord pronouncing it 6 eafier for a Camel to go through the Eye of a Needle, than for a rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of God: And, Te fee your Calling, Brethren, fays St. Paul c, bow that not many wife Men after the Flesh, not many Mighty, not many Noble are called. On the contrary, the Poor, the Despised, the Weak, are called the d Chosen of God, and Heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven. But fuch Expressions as these do chiefly respect those Times wherein they were fpoken, when a Man could not be a Christian without hazarding the Loss of his Goods and Preferments, and falling into a State of Reproach and Persecution: For which Reasons those who had great Attachments to the World, were hardly perfuaded to risque the Lofs of them for future and invisible Bleffings; while others, who had little or nothing to lofe, were more ready to comply with fuch Overture. But now fince Christianity is no longer attended with fuch Inconveniences, a plentiful State is so far from re-

Colciil. 11. Mark x. 25 Cor. i. 26, 27. 4 Jam ii. 9. tarding edit

tarding a Man, that it may very well fet him forward in his way to Heaven, affording him Leisure and Ability for exercising the most eminent Duties of Piety and Charity, and abounding in those good Works, which Men of narrower Circumstances have no

Power to perform.

Not but that the Care of our Soul is confiftent with that of our Body, even in the most laborious kind of Life, The Poor, fays our Lord, have the Gospel preached unto them; which would be to no Purpole, if they were not capable of the great Bleffings it propounds. We are indeed commanded to feek the Kingdom of God in the first Place; but we are no where incouraged to leave our honest Trades and Imployments, to devote our whole Time to religious Exercifes; nay, we have both the Example and Injunctions of our Masters the Apostles, to be diligent in our secular Professions. Let every Man, fays St. Paul, a bide in the same Calling wherein he was called. ' If any provide not for his own, especially for those of his own House, he hath denied the Faith, and is worse than an Infidel. Let bim that stole, steal no more; but rather let him labour, working with his Hands the thing which is Good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. And yet how vehemently doth he call upon them in other Places to be Heavenly-minded, to pray always, to give Thanks in every thing, to press forward to the

¹ Cor vii, 20. 1 Tim. v. 3. Ephef. iv. 28.

Mark for the Prize of the high Calling in God? Which is a plain Demonstration, that Diligence in the lawful and necessary Affairs of this Life, is very confiftent with a Zeal for the Honour of God, and the Welfare of our Souls. And that this is no impracticable Speculation, we learn from the History of the two great Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, who follow'd Fishing and Tent-making, after they were called to the Apostleship and Ministry of Jesus

Chrift.

Our Bleffed Saviour declares, that his Kingdom is not of this World; he came not to change Mens outward Circumstances, and advance the Poor to good Estates : And therefore, fince the far greatest Part of Mankind, must by their Labours provide Sustenance for themselves and others, we must either say, that the Kingdom of Heaven was not delign'd for fuch Men, which is contrary to many express Declarations and Invitations of the Gofpel; or elfe confess, that no more is required in order to obtain it, than what the necessary Affairs of Life will admit of.

Notwithstanding this, we must take care that we do not create more Necesfities to our felves, than fuch as God and Nature have made; which is the Fault of Men that are condemn'd for Covetoulnels, and too great Love of the World; they are always apprehensive of future Wants and Necessities, which they have no cause to fear. The Reafon is, because they aspire after Happiness in this Mark

this Life, which they imagine to be founded in the Possession of abundance of Wealth, whereby they may procure the Pleafures and Honours of the World; which is natural for us to be fond of: But then we are to remember that our Nature is depraved and prejudiced in favour of these Things; and though they are but transitory and empty, yet they offer themselves to our Senses with the great Advantage of present Enjoyment; whereas the eternal Bleffings of Heaven are absent, and perceivable only by our Faith. This makes it necessary that we should abstract our Thoughts, as much as we can, from fensible Objects, and by frequent Contemplation fix them on Things above; and check our felves fometimes, even in our lawful Affairs and Enjoyments, that we fuffer not our Affections to run out too much after them, fo far as to frustrate our main Design, which ought ever to be, the Kingdom of God and his Righteou Inefs.

THE most effectual Means to keep our Hearts right in these Matters, is an habitual Medication on that Saying of our Lord, What (ball a Man give in Exchange for bis Soul? The whole World can make no Compensation for the Loss of it. For our Senses tells us, that those who have the greatest Share of it, enjoy it but a very little Time: And our Faith tells us, that this shorts uncertain Term of Life, is all the Opportunity we shall ever have, of preparing our felves for the Kingdom of Heaven. If we fail to improve the prefent .H 3 Seafon

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Season to this good Purpose, we shall not only be punished with the irreparable Loss of this Kingdom, but likewise with the Pains of that

contrary State which we call Hell; which I am



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The STATE of the DAMNED there.

HERE is the fame Reason for the everlasting Punishment of the Wicked, as there is for the eternal Salvation of the Righteous. The Justice of Goo cannot be clear'd

and glorified, the Truth of his Word cannot be fulfilled, without it. For there are as plain Threatnings of Hell Torments in God's Word, as there are Promiles of Heavenly Happinels. These, says Christ, speaking of the Wicked, shall go unto everlasting Fire. But to what Purpose should this Fire last for ever, if the Reason of it, which is the Punishment of impenitent Sinners, should cease by their Annihilation of the Fire be everlasting in which God

God punishes Reprobates, if the Punishment inflicted on them be everlasting, then must they everlaftingly fublift to endure that Punishment; otherwise, there would be a Punishment inflicted, and none endured, which is a Contradiction. And however it may be argued, That some Things in Scripture are call'd Eternal, which have but a limited or determinate Existence, yet that Sense cannot be put upon the Eternity of Hell-Torments, which are afferted in the same absolute, unlimited Terms as the Happiness of Heaven is. Our Saviour, who shall be the Judge of all Men, hath forewarned us, That it is better to enter into Life halt or maimed, rather than having two Hands, or two Feet, to be cast into everlasting Fire. And he hath farther explained himself by that repeated Addition, and undeniable Description of the Place of Torments. where the Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched. And that we may be yet farther affured, that this Fire shall never be extinguished, we read, b That the Smoke of their Torment ascended up for ever and ever; and, that those which are cast into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone, Shall be tormented Day and Night for ever and ever: Which Expression of Day and Night, is the same with that which declareth the eternal Happiness in the Heavens, where they rest not Day and Night, saying, Holy, Holy,

Matt, xviii. | Rev. xiv. 11. 'Rev. xx, 10, 14 Rev.

Holy: Where they are before the Throne of God, and serve him Day and Night in his Temple. If then the Fire in which the Reprobates are tormented, be everlasting; if so absolutely everlasting, that it shall never be quenched; if those which are cast into it, shall be tormented for ever and ever, all which the Scriptures expressly teach; then shall the Wicked never be so consumed, as to be annihilated, but shall subsist for ever, and be Coerernal to the tormenting Flames.

HAVING thus afferted the Endless Duration of Infernal Punishments, it will be proper to consider the Nature of them, which is best accounted for in this Definition; That

they confift in Loss and Pain.

The Loss which wicked Men shall sustain, is Twofold; viz. That of the Pleasures and Comforts of this Life, which they once enjoy'd; and that of the infinite Blessings of Heaven, which they might have obtain'd together with all Hopes of repairing either of

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Ungop Ly Men are for the present alienated from the Love of God, and Desires of Heaven, through the sensual Lusts and Vanities which amuse them. But yet there are very sew, if any among them, who are quite destitute of all Hopes, that they shall some time or other, before they leave this World, make their Peace with God, and find Rest for their Souls. These Thoughts, "tis true, are very confused and indigested in them; but yet how much they help to support their Spirits, may be concluded from that dismal State of Melancholy and Anguish of Mind, which some of them have fallen into, when they have been utterly deprived of these Hopes, and anticipated the Sentence of Con-

demnation upon themselves.

BUT when they come to that Place where this Sentence shall be fully confirmed, and are at the same time bereav'd of every Beam of Earthly Light and Comfort, and have moreover, a quicker and larger Notion of the Happinels of Heaven, it will not be easie to imagine how severe a Punishment this Loss must be to them. What Rage, what Indignation must overwhelm them, when they reslect on what they have accepted in Exchange for the eternal Peace and Welfare of their Souls ! What imaginary, short-liv'd Pleasures they have prefer'd above those which are substantial and incorruptible! How will their Consciences upbraid them with the manifold Offers of Grace, and pressing Exhortations to refuse the Evil, and choose the Good, which they have most unkindly and contemptuously rejected! Into what Gall and Bitterness will those miserable Enjoyments be turn'd, which diverted them from hearkening to these wife and wholesome Counsels! Was it possible. nav easie for them, to have prevented their coming to this Place of Torments, by hearkening in the Days of their Life and Strength.

Ministers? was this very Place pointed out to them, and the Way mark'd out for them to avoid it? were their Eyes opened to fee, and own, and confess it? and yet after all, did they knowingly and willingly go on, 'till they threw themselves headlong into this Pit of Destruction?

SUCH Reflections as thefe will, like fo many Vultures, be incessantly gnawing the Hearts of Wretches confign'd to irrecoverable Perdition; and whatever Excuses they may invent at present, to cheat themselves of a Glorious and Happy Immortality, in those woful Regions they will no longer abuse their Understandings, by calling Evil Good, and Good Evil; but will, to their unfpeakable Confusion, allow the Wisdom of being Religious, and the inestimable Value of those Bleffings which are the Rewards of it. . There Shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth, fays Christy when they shall fee Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the Prophets, in the Kingdom of God, and they themselves thrust out. Here the Com? passions of God are at an end, the Scepter of his Mercy is no longer held forth, no more Offers of Pardon and Reconciliation are exhibited : but every thing that has the least Appearance of Good or Comfort in it, is lost to all Eternity and Falana) amolalow has nay calle for chem. to have n

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CHAP. XI. CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

HAVING thus shew'd how great their Loss is who are shut out of Rest, and how it will be aggravated by those additional Losses which will accompany it; I proceed now to speak of the Nature of those tormenting Pains, which shall without Intermission be inslicted on condemned Sinners.

THE Scripture, which must be our Guide herein, doth fo plainly acquaint us, that Divine Vengeance shall be executed on Reprobates in politive Pains, that it is strange any one should ever dispute or deny it. The Worm that never dies shall prey upon their Souls, and the Fire that never shall be quenched, shall involve their Bodies. For the Bodies of the Wicked as well as of the Righteous, shall be raifed again at the last Day, according to the Confession of St. Paul, There shall be a Re-Surrection both of the Just and of the Unjust: And fo our Lord himself hath taught us, That all that are in the Grave fall hear his Voice, and fall come forth; they that bave done Good, to the Resurrection of Life; and they that have done Evil, to the Resurrection of Damnation. Now as the Bodies of wicked Men shall be raised again, so there shall be such Punishments prepar'd for them, as will affect the Bodies, and annoy all the Senses of it, which are express'd by the Terms of Fire and Brimstone, and everlasting Burnings, which excite the most agute and intolerable Pains that Men are capable of feeling. We cannot doubt but every thing about the Damned shall be most horrid and dismal to the

Eyes,

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Eyes, most novsom to the Smell, most dreadful and alarming to the Ears, and most pungent and torturing to the Feeling; infomuch that they shall gnash with their Teeth for Anguish, and fill those woful Regions with confused Shrieks and Howlings, and outragious Blasphemies against God, by reason of the fierce Execution of his Wrath upon them.

herein, doth fo plainly acquaint us, that Di-

IF we confider in what Company Reprobates shall be shut up in the bottomless Pit, it will give us a farther Idea of their Pains: Go ye Curfed, fays the Almighty Judge, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels. Now what fort of Companions the Devils will prove to Men, may be conjectur'd by their Treatment of them here on Earth. When these evil Spirits have been suffer'd to take Poffession of any abandon'd Mortal, into what Convulsions have they thrown him how have they differted his Face, and all his Joynts and Limbs! how have they agitated him, and forced him to bruife himself, and tear his own Blesh! The many Passages in the Gospel, of Demoniacks raging and foaming, and breaking Chains and Fetters wherewith they were bound, will abundantly certifie us of this. Let it be remembred withal, That the Devil was a Murderer from the beginning, and that all Murders, and Acts of Malice, Spite and Envy, which are committed in the World, are done at his Infligation, and then swaned that be most horrid and difinal to the

CHAP.XI. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. for

we cannot doubt but he will wreak his Malice to the utmost upon those wretched Sons of Men, whom the Justice of God shall deliver into his Hands, to be tormented by him.

AND though I observed before, That the Scripture must guide us in Things of this Nature, yet it cannot be amis to observe here. That Idolaters and Strangers to our Religion. have very much agreed with us in their Opinion of the State of the Damned. As we are taught to call it a Lake burning with Fire and Brimstone, so they imagine a River to be there, which they call Phlegethon; that is, a burning River. As we refemble it to the Burnings of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, whence we call it Gehenna; so they reported, That the Giants which fought against the Gods, were buried under Mount Atna, and in the Phlegraan Fields, which Places were continually fmoaking, and vomiting out Torrents of fulphureous Fire. They held, That there were certain Evil Spirits, whom they named Eumenides, Fiends and Furies, whose Business was to torment wicked Men with Variety of exquisite Tortures, according to the Crimes they had committed in this Life. The Place of Execution was known among them by the Name of Tartarus, which is what we call utter Darknefs. This may fuffice to shew, what Agreement there is between Natural and Reveal'd Religion

Religion, concerning the Nature and Quality of Infernal Punishments.

SEEING then that we know these Punishments fufficiently by Faith, let us take heed that we never know them by Experience. Let them have that good Effect upon us at this Distance, to keep us from those wicked Ways which lead to them. For qui wult media, vult finem; it is a Madness for any Man to be afraid of the End, and at the same time in love with the Means which are link'd to it. Solomon observes, That it is in vain to spread the Net in the Sight of any Bird; because The hath Sense enough to conclude, that her Destruction is intended thereby: And therefore Man must be more Irrational than the Fowls of the Air, who when the Pit of Destruction is plainly set in his View, doth notwithfranding comply with the Temptations of the Devil, which are thrown out to him on purpose to decoy him into this Pit. Neither is it consistent with Wisdom and Reason, to flatter one's felf with the Infinite Mercies of God in contradiction to his plain Declarations. For God hath declar'd. That this present Life is the Acceptable Time, the Day of Salvation, the Opportunity for embracing the Offers of his Grace, and making our Calling and Ele-Ction fure. Why are we so earnestly exhorted to work while it is called To Day, to make Hafte, and prolong no Time in fetting about Religion

the Duties of God's Commandments; to watch and pray, that we may be ready to meet our Lord at what Hour foever he shall come? Why is it said in the Parable of the Foolish Virgins, that the Door was shut upon them, while they went to buy that Oyl which they should have provided before hand; and when they return'd, and cry'd to their Lord to upon the Door, he refused, telling them, the knew them not? Are not these sufficient Warnings to us, that if we die in an impenitent State, there is no Help for us, but we must have our Portion with Reptobates?

AND left any Man should flatter himself. That in the Interval between Death and the Day of Judgment, there might be Room to rectifie the Errors of this present Life, the facred Penmen feem concern'd to obviate fuch a fatal Mistake, by often affuring us, That there is no Work, nor Device, nor Knowledge, nor Wisdom in the Grave; that the Night cometh, when none can work; that every Man shall receive according to what he hath done in the Body; and that nothing remains after Death, but Judgment. The Mercy of God is fufficiently magnified, in that he hath fully made known the Terms of Salvation to Men. Behold, fays Moses b, CHAP.

^{*} Ecclef. ix. 10. Deut. XXX.

304 The SUM of the PARTE

Thave set before thee this Day, Life and Good, and Death and Evil: in that I command thee to love the Lord thy God, to walk in his Ways, and to keep his Commandments, and his Statutes, and his Judgments. But if thine Heart turn away, that thou wilt not hear, I denounce unto you, That ye shall surely perish. These Terms being possible to be fulfilled by any Man, his Misery is from himself, if he fails in the Personnance. God is not unrighteous that taketh Vengeance; but it is rather necessary for the Vindication of his Justice and Providence, as I have before shew'd.

An p lest any Man should flatter himself, That in the Interval between Death and the



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of Salvation to Men. Rehald, Mays Moles & ...



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EARTHLY Habitation,

And the Reason of our ABODE, and Duration of our LIFE in it.

B Condition here on EARTH, being neither so happy as the Angels, nor so miserable as the De-

vils; but tasting both of Happiness and Mifery, by way of Earnest as it were, and to determine our Choice, which we will have for our Portion in a future State. For such is the Will of our Almighty Disposer and Sovereign, that after a short Course of Life spent upon Earth, which rarely exceeds seventy or eighty Years, and very often extends not so far, we must be remov'd from our Earthly Abodes, and added to the Society of good or bad Angels, according as our Souls, at their Release from the Body, shall be found qualified.

THE Houses that God grants to us are no perpetual Dwellings, but only Inns for our present Conveniency; we therefore should look

upon

MOOLE

upon our Houses and Possessions, as upon things that are lett tous, while we fojournhere in our Way to our long Home; for St. Paul informs us. that the great Patriarchs of old, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, declared that they were no better than Strangers and Pilgrims upon Earth, and that their Intention was to march to their Celeftial Country. He that is travelling into a strange Country, if he be well treated in his Inn. must not set his Heart too much on the good Chear; and if his Entertainment be bad, he must endure with Patience the Inconveniences, and contemn all the Diforders that happen during his Abode there. If the Way be deep, full of Mud, Briars and Thorns, he must get out of it as foon as he can; if it be good and pleafant, he must not stop in it, nor busy himself in needless Inquiries: Every wise and careful Traveller, thinks of nothing but how to advance in his Journey. Likewife we being here accustomed to Plenty and Want to Riches and Poverty, to Honour and Dishonour, we ought to leave the Things that are behind; and to proceed forward to fuch as are before, that we may attain to the End and Reward of our Heavenly Calling, and fo to use these worldly things as not to hinder us in our Journey for Way to Heaven. visiood and of bobbs

I F we have crucified our Affections and Lusts, then are we in a manner dead to this World. If our Heart be in Heaven, the principal Part of our Life is there too; for where our chief Delight is, there we may be faid to live.

CHAP. XII. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 107.

Heaven, that he might thereby teach us to tift up our Hearts, thither also and carry thi-

ther our Affections and Defires.

THIS present Life then is a State of Probation and Tryal, a School of Discipline. wherein we are train'd up for another. We must not permit our selves to loiter and be idle in it. The facred Writers who are our Mafters and Tutors, call us to fundry Exerdifes, according to the Condition and Post affign'd us. Are we afflicted with a feeble and crazy Constitution of Body, or with Crosses and Difficulties in our outward Circumstances, or with both these together? 'tis an Exercife of our Patience, Contentedness, and Refignation to the Will of God. We may use honest Means to relieve our selves; but if they prove ineffectual, we must heartily fay, The Will of the Lord be done. To repine at the Dispensations of Providence, is to charge God foolishly, as if he were not a wife and a just Governor. Our Life is a Warfare, and we must bravely maintain the Station to which our great Commander appoints us. The greatest Champions in the Army of the Faithful, have been made perfect through Sufferings. After a heavy Load of Calamities both in Body and Effate, Job + couragiously professes, that he will wast all the Days of his appointed Time, till

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his Change come. But we have a greater Example than this; what could be comparable to the Condition of our Bleffed Lord, in whom the clearest Innocence; and the most dreadful Sufferings met together? yet he quietly fubmits, and fays, Father, if this Cup may not pass from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. And again, The Cup which my Heavenly Father hath given me to drink, Shall I not drink it? After fo great a Pattern as this let us be dumb, and not open our Mouth at any Affliction which is laid upon us, when we are fure

crazy Confitution of Body, gniob s'boo siti But if on the other hand, we enjoy the Goods of the Body and of Fortune, as they are ftyl'd, then it behoves us to exercise much Temperance and Moderation in the Enjoyment of them. We are to consider our selves as travelling in a strange Country, where it would be inconvenient and contrary to our Defign, to load our felves with too much Provision; we should do well to bestow what is fuperfluous upon our poor fellow Travellers that want it. However, this doth not hinder us from providing for our Families, and laying up fomething in Store for Posterity: For they must travel the same Road with our selves. But where there are no fuch Reasons, we must be more communicative to others; and even in this Case not too restrain'd. As for what we expend upon our own Persons, St. Paul's Rule will direct us in every Particular, That we use this World so as not to abuse it. There

are certain Bounds wherein we may taffe the Pleasures and Delights of it; but it is fafer to come fhort than go to the Outlide of our Limits. A Man may indeed abstain from the Pleasures and Comforts of Life, out of an immoderate Love of the World: This is the Ab-flinence of a coverous Man. He punishes his Body, but it is because he idolizes his Wealth. and counts it a greater Happiness to possess than enjoy. But a Candidate of Heaven ab-fluins only that he may subdue his carnal Affections, and confult the Interest and Comforts of his Soul; that he may have the more to spare for pious and charitable Uses; that he may make Friends with the Mammon of Unrighteousness, and provide himself Bags which wax not old, a Treasure in the Heavens.

In both Estates, of Prosperity and Adverfity, the Confideration which will make a wife and good Man not over much affected with them, is this, That they will last but a very fhort Time, and be swallow'd up in consummate and unchangeable Happiness. This is enough to keep him steddy in his Pursuit of it, against all Temptations on the right Hand and on the left. Indeed if these Houses of Clay were fo built, as to last some thousands of Years, bodily Pleasures and Pains would be more confiderable; if the Age of Man were commenfurate with that of the World, he would have, Reason to be more concern d about the Affairs, of it. But now that instead of Thoulands we

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can only attain to some sew Scores of Years, and ar the End of those Years can boast of but little Happiness, alloy'd with abundance of Pains and Troubles, a Man that hath suit Notions of these things, will not find it difficult to bear the Want of these sleeting and unsatisfactory Joys, or to abstain from them when in his Power, for the sake of those solid and lasting ones which he hath in View, and is ready every Day to arrive at. This is the Mark, the Prize of the High Calling which God hath set up for him to aim at, and bend all his Efforts and Thoughts towards it; and whether the Way he is to run be smooth or plain, or sull of Flints, Thorns and Briars, it will be all one in a very sew Days. Every Wound and Pain will be cured, and he made as whole and as easie, as it he had never selt them.

THERE is nothing wanting to arm Men with Patience and Moderation in their present Circumstances, but a serious Attention to that eternal State into which they are launching. Who wou'd not quietly bear all the Hardships of this short Life (which yet are seldom inflicted all together upon one Person) that he might escape the intense and endels Torments of Hell? Who wou'd not readily give up his whole Portion of earthly Pleasures and Comforts (which yet he may best enjoy within the Rules of Temperance and Beneficence) for the Attainment of that Happiness in Heaven, which will fully satisfy all his Delires, and last with squal Satisfaction to all Eternity? How

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CHAP. XII. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 111:

happy would the Man be efteem'd, who should have liv'd from the Beginning to the End of this World in perfect Strength, and Peace, and Joy? And yet, alas! all this is no more in comparison of eternal Happiness, than a Drop to the Ocean, or a Glow-worm to the Sun. Nothing in this World can hurt us, if we will but imprint that Saying of St. Paul deeply upon our Minds; The Things which are feen are Temporal; but the Things which are not feen are Eternal.



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Nothing in this World on hure us, if we will be investing that Saying of St. Paul deeply but imprint that Savin

upon our Mind Inching of St.)

The Circumstances of his Present STATE, And the PERIOD of Humane Life.

HEN God furvey'd the Works of the CREATION, the Heavens being adorn'd with the Glorious Luminaries of the Sun, Moon and Stars; and the Earth replenished

with all Things needful for Life and Suftenance; to give the finishing Stroke to his Works, he faid, Let us make MAN in our Image, according to our Likeness. So God created Man in his own Image, in the Image of God created. he him, Male and Female created he them. Thus he fumm'd up all his Works into Man, the Universe into an individual, a lesser Scheme of the Creation, Nature contracted; in him were collected all the scatter'd Perfections of other Creatures; all their Graces, Ornaments, and Excellencies were united in this Divine System of Nature.

CHAP.XIII. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 113

TO Adam our first Parent, God gave Power and Dominion over all Earthly Creatures; he made him his Vice-Roy and Lord Lieutenant of this lower World, providing for him a delightful Habitation in the Garden of Eden. But Man not satisfied with that fovereign Dominion, that high Station, that blifsful Seat affign'd him, but aspiring to an Equality with God, emulating his omniscient Maker, he fell into the fame Sin of Pride, as the Angels had done before him; for which God thruft him out of Paradife; faying unto him, Because thou hast hearkened unto the Voice of thy Wife, and haft eaten of the Tree, of which I commanded thee faying, Thou shalt not eat of it: Eursed is the Ground for thy sake: In sorrow thou shalt eat of it all the Day's of thy Life. In the Sweat of thy Face halt thou eat Bread, till thou return to the Ground, for out of it wast thou taken: for Dust thou art, and anto Dust Chalt thou return.

This Sin of our First Parents is the Cause, that the whole Race of Mankind (from the Beginning to the End of the World) either labour and toil for their Bread, or at least meet with Sorrows, Cares, Perplexities and Misfortunes in the Course of their Lives, and that no Mortal is without his Share of some of these. Whereas had our first Parents continued in that State of Obedience God obliged them to, then should we all have been compleatly happy, and have known none of these Sorrows, Pains and Wants which now afflict us. But for the Circumstances of our present

State, Job hath rightly describ'd it: Man that is born of a Woman, is of few Days and full of Trouble. He cometh forth like a Flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a Shadow, and continueth not. Indeed so brittle is the Thread of Life, that we may say of our last Hour what our Lord says of the Day of Judgment; It cometh as a Thief in the Night. When we least suspect the Approach of Death, it may call us to go hence and be no more. How many Thousands of strange and unexpected Accidents artend us in this Life! Man also knoweth not his Time. As the Fishes that are taken in an evil Net, and as the Birds that are taken in the Snare; so are the Sons of Men snared in an evil Time, when it falleth sude denly upon them.

Now whereas God Created three forts of fiving Creatures, Angelical, Rational and Senfireva, affigning to Angels an invollectual, and to Beifts a fenfual Nature, he hath given to Man the Intellect of Angels, in a Capacity of free and unconfin a Thinking, the Apprehimtion of Bests in the Take, Small, and other Schies, and a rational Paculty peculiar to Man. enabling him to chale what is most conductive to his Well-being He hath imprinced his own divine Character and Similaride ripon the Soulof Man, making it thereby to diller from di Bearts, as it is manifeld from the only account of both; which Hands thus; List Waters foring forth, in abusidance (2019) creeping Thing and let the Earth british for the

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CHAP.XIII. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 114

from the Earth and Water were they brought forth. But of Man it is said; Let us make Man in our own Image. And God breathed into him the Breath of Life, and Man became a Living Soula Thus God made us little lower than the Angels; tho' the greatest Part of Mankind, 'tis fear'd, make themselves lower than the very Beasts.

THE End and Delign of our Abode here, is to ferve God in this present Life, that we may enjoy Heaven and Life everlasting in the World to come. Thus we are taught by the Heavenly Choir, Thou art morthy, O Lord, to receive Glory and Honour and Pomer; for thou hast created all Things; and for thy Plea-Jure they are and mere created. Hence we conclude, that Man was created to give Glory, Honour and Praise to God, and to live in Obedience to his Will and Pleasure. The Distolution which we fuffer by Death, purs not an End to the Soul, for that returns to God who gave it: Nor absolutely to the Body, but only for a Time, till the Refurrection, when this Corruptible shall put on Incorruption, and this Mortal shall put on Immortality: It being equally as posfible for God to reftore our Bodies, after they have been reduced to Dust in the Grave, as it was for him at first to produce all. Things out of Nothing. He who erected Man out of the Ground into that excellent Shape and Figure he now bears, cannot want Power to raise him

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^{*} Rev. iv. 11,

out of the Dust again at the last Day. But to put this Power out of all Doubt, the holy Scripture gives us an unquestionable Demonstration of it, in the History of Lazarus; where it is said, that when Jesus, Martha and Mary came to his Grave, where he had lain four Days, and was supposed to be in a putrifying Condition; Jesus cried with a loud Voice; Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth bound Hand and Foot with Grave Cloaths. Jesus saith unto them, Loofe him, and tet him go. Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him. In the following Chapters we have an Account, that the Sisters of Lazarus made Jesus a Supper; to which many of the Jews came, not for Jesus's sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the Dead.

When our Saviour was crucified, the Evangelist tells us that the Graves were opened, and
many Bodies of Saints which stept (or were dead)
arose, and came our of the Grave after his Resurrection, and went into the Holy City (serusalem)
and appear'd anto many. Our Lord himself the
Evening of the Day on which he arose, appear'd unto his Disciples being all assembled
together, with the Doors shur, and stood in the
midst of them; and Fear came upon them all,
as being perswaded that it was a Spirit; till
Christ bid them not be afraid, but observe
his Hands and Feet, that it was he himself.

Rev. Tv. ct.

D

John xi. Mat. xx vii. 32.

THE very Payans themselvest believed that the Soul furvived its Release from the Body otherwise they had never Deified their Ances ftors, and other famous Men, to whose Ghosts they offer'd Sacrifices, and Invoked them in their Brayers. They also believed, that there was a future State of Happines and Mifery, to reward the Good, and punish the Wicked. Of which there are certain Foretaftes in this Life. What Raptures and Transports of Joy does the Pions Man feel in Spiritual Communion with God by Holy Meditations, Prayers, and Thanksgivings! What Terrors seize upon the Wicked, when some great Calamity, like a Voice from Heaven, fummons him to Judgment, especially when Death looks him in the Face to What frightful Apprehensions is he under be What Pangs and Tortures rack his Conscience in Forelight of the horrible Doom and Vengeance prepared for him! Thus we find, Nature it felf bears Testimony to the Immortality of the Soul, and a Future dules, Humours, and the whole Structustists

the Earth, so the Soul was derived from the Breath of God, which is a farther Argument of its Immortality. And we are faid to retain the Image of God, when we imitate his Perifections; as when we are Merciful to our Hellow Creatures, because God is Mercy it felf. It is this Part of Man more especially, which God made after his own Ishage. To this he hath given Eyes which can in a Moment

ment reach the distant Parts of the Earth. and pierce through the gross Veil of Flesh to the Contemplation of Spiritual and Head ffors, and other famous Men. respiridT vinev

THE wonderful Art and Wildom of Gon in the Formation of our Bodies, appears in the Multitude of Utes, to which the feveral Parts are delign'd. Gaten, in his Book De Formal tione Farus, takes Norice, That there are in a Humane Body above Six hundred feveral Mufcles, and ar leaft ten feveral Purpofes of Uses to be observ'd in each of these; as, proper Figure, just Magnitude, right Disposition. Infertion of proper Veins and Arteries, which arbualbrofithem to be duly placed; fo that about the Muscles whole Six thousand Uses on Ends are to be attended to. The Bones are reckoned to be 284. The diffinet Scopes or Intentions in each of thefe, are above Forty in all, about One hundred thousand. And thus it is in some Proportion with all the other Parts, the Skin, Ligaments, Veffels, Glans dules, Humours, and the whole Structure of the Body. The Failing in any one of thefe, would daufe Irregularity, and oin many of them, fuch as would be very incommodious. Now to imagine, that fuch a Frame, compofed of fo many Parts, to the right Order and Motion whereof fuch an infinite Number of Intentions are required, could be made without the Contrivance of some wife Agent, must needs be Irrational in the highest Degree? All other Animals, with down-cast Eyes, are depress'd

CHAP XIII. CHRISTIAN RELIGION TIG depres'd to the Ground: Man alone hath the Privilege to walk upright, and with an rerect Countenance to discover Things afan off, to provide for his Safety, and to avoid Dangers. All Animals have Tongues: but the Tongue of Man only can form Words by which he declares his Thoughts. How wonderfully, fays Job, is Man formed in the Womb! He cannot fee or perceive how the Members are fet together. Galen challenged any one, upon an Hundred Years Study, to find out, how any the leaft Fibre, or most minute Particle, might be more commodiously placed. Some think it a notable Argument of Divine Wildom, that Men are for wonderfully diffinguished by their Faces, that there are not Two in all the World absolutely alike. But I think they are mear as well diffinguished by their Voices. their Mien, and Gesture; and perhaps by their Hand-writing, inafmuch as they all differ in the shaping of their Letters, though writing the fame fort of Hand, and taught by one and the same Master. Indeed, unless there were certain Notes of Distinction in Men, what Confusion and Disorder would necessarily follow? what Frauds and Cheats, and Halfe Witness? what Subversion of Justice and Judgment? Who could be fafe in his Estate or Life? who could swear that such or fuch Persons committed Murders, Assaults, Thefts, Robberies, if Men were not clearly

diffinguished one from another?

St. PAUL

St. PAUL teaches us to spiritualize and fanctifie the Ufe of our Bodily Members. when he faith, I befesch you, Brethren, by the Mercies of God, that ye prefent your Bodies a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your Reasonable Services There is a Necessity of feeding the Soul, no less than the Body. The Food of the Soul is Knowledge, particularly the Knowledge of Religion, the Doctrines of Christianity, the Things that concern our eternal Peace and Happiness. Knowledge is the Root, and Practice the Fruit. It is impossible for us ever to Do God's Will, before we Understand it : the Word must be receiv'd into an honest and good Heart, and well digested and understood, before it can be productive of Good Works.

THE Care and Adorning of our Body often imploys too much of our Time and Thoughts: let it suggest to us how our Sours should be cloathed with Holy and Virtuous Habits. Be ye cloathed with Humility, faith St. Peter b, with the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit. When our Bodies are fick and wounded, we call the Physician and Surgeon. Let us remember, That Sin is the Disease of the Soul; for the Cure of which, an humble, ferious, hearty Repentance is the only Physick. I had

St. Paur

Minuters/ Analysis Rom, xii. 1. b 1 Pet. v. Saldo II , 2 1011

CHAP. XIII. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 121

THE Eye that beholds no evil Thing with Delight, becomes an acceptable Sacrifice. The Lips that speak no Guile, are a Spiritual Oblation. The Tonque which uttereth no Evil, is render'd an Holocaust. However, it is not enough to restrain the Members from Evil. but they must also be exercised in that which is Good: the Eyes in reading the Word of God, and other good Books; the Tongue in Prayers and Praises, and all kind of useful Discourse; the Hand in labouring in an honest Calling, and ministring to the Wants of the Necessitous; our Feet swift to do every good Work, and walking in all Humility, as in the Sight of God; the Ear in hearkening to all profitable Discourses; the Knees bended in our Divine Worship. In short, our whole Spirit, and Soul, and Body must be pure and holy, constantly disposed to, and commonly practifing every Thing that is Virtuous and Praise-worthy.

In the Jewish Church there was required a Sacrifice of Beatls; we are now commanded to present our Bodies a hely, acceptable, and lively Sacrifice, by crucifying our Lusts and sinful Affections, dying unto Sin, and living unto Righteousness. We are to offer still, not the Flesh of Bulls and the Blood of Goats, but the Rational Sacrifice of our own Bodies, the Incense of servent Devotion; the Thank-offering of Praise: That our Prayers be set forth

a Pfalm cxli. 12.

122 The SUM of the, &c. PART 1.

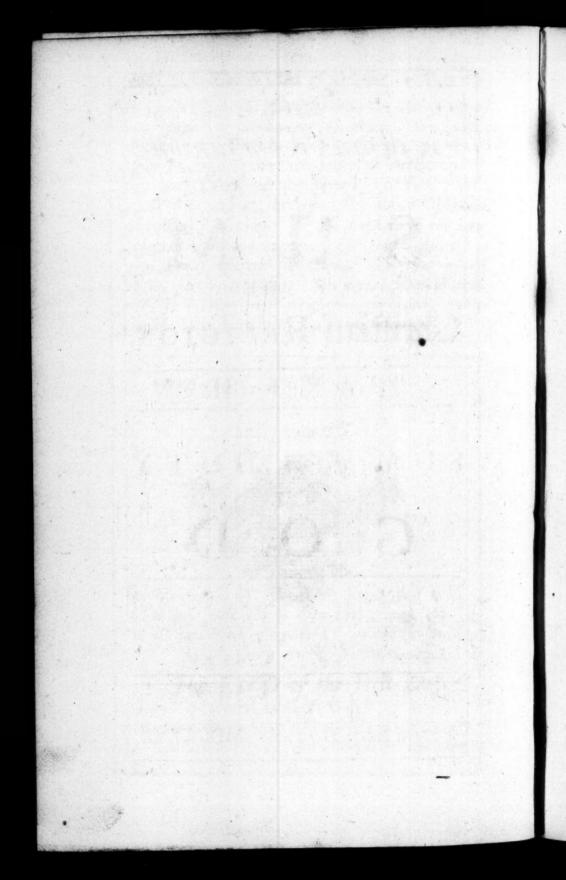
in God's Sight as Incense, and the listing up of our Hands as an Evening-Sacrifice. We must dedicate the First-born of our Souls, pure and holy Thoughts; the First-fruits of our Strength, our best Years, in the Worship of God. We must vow to him, and pay the daily Oblation of sincere Obedience. He that keepeth the Law, bringeth Offerings enough. He that requiteth a good Turn, offereth sine Flour. He that giveth Alms, sacrificeth Praise. To depart from Wickedness, is a Thing most pleasing to the Lord; and to forsake Unrighteousness, is a Propitiation.

Sight of God; the Ear in Standing, as in the profitable Discourses; the start descriptions our Divine Worship. In their our whole our Divine Worship. In their, our whole opinit, and Soul, and Bod, must be pure and hely, constantly, dispose the stand opinions and practising every Theorem of Sacrifice of Beath of Sacrifice of Beath our book commanded to present our book of commanded in the Flesh on, dying the Sacrifice, by the second and the Blood of Goats, but the Flesh of Balls and the Blood of Goats, but the Flesh of Balls and the Blood of Goats, but the Flesh of Balls and the Blood of Goats, but the Flesh of Balls and the Blood of Goats, but the Flesh of Balls and the Blood of Goats, but the Flesh of Balls and the Blood of Goats, but the Elesh of Balls and the Blood of Goats, but the Elesh of Balls and the Blood of Goats, but the Elesh of Balls and the Blood of Goats, but the Elesh of Balls and the Blood of Goats, but the Elesh of Balls and the Blood of Goats, but the Elesh of Balls and the Blood of Goats, but the Elesh of Balls and the Blood of Goats, but the Elesh of Balls and the Blood of Goats, but the Elesh of Balls and the Blood of Goats, but the Elesh of Balls and the Blood of Goats, but the Elesh of Balls and the Blood of Goats, but the Elesh of Balls and the Blood of Goats, but

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Christian Religion.

PART II.

Containing the

SUM of our DUTY

TO

GOD

Thou shalt Love the LORD thy GOD with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind. This is the First and Great Commandment, Matt. xxii. 37, 38.

LONDON:

Printed for J. HOOKE. MDCCXVI.

HHT Christian's Companion: AHT AO Christian Religion. PART II. Containing the SUM of our DUTY Thou fills Love the Louis the God with all thy Heart, and with all the Sout, and wath all the Street and Great Commandwest, That is true truet and Great Commandwest, Matt. 2011, 38. LONDON:

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PART II. CHAP. I.



S Almighty GOD gave Himself Six Days for Creating the World; fo He hath been pleased to give us Six Days for our Worldly Affairs, to provide for the Food

of the Body. And as He rested on the Seventh Day from his Works of Creation, so he hath ordain'd, That One Day in Seven Man should cease from his Bodily Labours, and seek after the Spiritual Food of his Soul. But here the K 4 Great

Great CREATOR'S Resting is not so to be understood, as if it implied any Weariness in Him, or Inability to farther Action : For the Creator of the Ends of the Earth, fainteth not. neither is weary. He rested or ceased from his Labours, only because he had finished his Work, and faw that every Thing was very good. He bleffed the Seventh Day, and hallowed it: that is. He dedicated it in a special Manner to his own Service.

MOREOVER, our Day of Rest is changed from the Seventh to the First Day of the Week, because this is the Day whereon we commemorate our Bleffed Redeemer's Resurrection from the Grave, who on the Morning of this Day, Triumphed over Death and Hell, and Ranfom'd us from our Slavery and Subjection to them. This is the Weekly Festival to us Christians, because the Work of our Redemption was this Day finished and compleated. Accordingly, we find the Apostles transferred their Religious Affemblies, with the Ministration of the Divine Word and Sacraments, to this Day; which was farther fanctified, in that our Lord then appear'd to them, and bleffed them after his Refurrection, and fent down the Holy Ghoft upon them after his Afcention, in to extraordinary and glorious a Manner upon this Day. So that tho' we have not any express Command, yet we have the Practice of the Apostles, and the full Appro-

the Spiritual Pood of his Soup Jean Flaiab xl. 28.

bation of Christ, to warrant us in changing our Day of Rest from the Seventh to the First

Day of the Week.

TO the end then that we may Celebrate this our Christian Sabbath in an acceptable Manner, let us follow the pious Example of the Primitive Christians, who used to spend the foregoing Eve in Prayer, Examination, and other Religious Exercises, to fit them for the Duties of the enfuing Festival. Whence we may suppose our Church derived the Custom of Reading in Saturday's Evening Prayer the Collect proper for the Sunday following. Let us then retire from our Worldly Concerns, and take an Account of our Actions the Week paft, bewailing our Sins of Omission and Commission, and imploring God's Mercy and Pardon for the fame. This will be much more fatisfactory and profitable to us in the End, than the late Fatigues of Business, or the more unpardonable Diversions of Plays and Entertainments, which render us very drowfie, or what is as bad, very careless and discomposed in the Publick Worship of God.

WE should, I think, make it a Rule, to Rise on Sunday Morning, Three Hours at least before the Service of the Church begins; if not rather as early this Day, as on any other of the Six, that we may be duly prepared both in Body and Mind, to present our selves in the House of God. David's Eyes prevented the Night-watches, that he might be occupied in God's Word; and shall we suffer ours to be closed

closed with Sleep, when the Sun inlightens the World, and calls us forth to the more glorious Light of the Gospel? By which, if we work while it is called To Day, our Bodies shall rise out of their dark Repositories far brighter than the Rays of this great Luminary; and fo Thine, as never to fet, or be obscured by any the least Spot or Cloud.

WHEN you Amake, Lift up your Soul with Thanksgiving to your Creator, for preserving you that Night, and affording you the Begining of another Day, especially a Sabbath-Day, to labour for his Glory, and the Eternal Welfare of your own Soul. When you Rife out of your Bed, let it put you in Mind of the Refurrection; and lift up your Heart to God

in this, or the like Ejaculation

O LORD, Grant, that as thou restorest our Bodies from Sleep and the Darkneß of the Night, to the Light of the Day; so our Souls by thy Grace may be rouzed from the Lethargy of Sin, and invested at the General Resurrection with Eternal Glory.

Much Time ought not to be spent in adorning these perishable Bodies; which stand in need of Cloathing for no other Reason, but because we fell from our Original Persection. and loft the more precious Robes of Innocence, Alas! what can we be proud of in these Accourrements of the Body, which are only the Monuments of our Sin and our Shame? If Solomon choice

Solomon in all his Glory was less shining than one of the Lillies of the Field, how little reason have any Mortals to value themselves for the Figure they make? How poor and low a Design is it, to go to Church, only or chiefly, to be seen, or to aim at the Applause of the nicest Dresser in the Congregation? To be very exact in the adorning of the Body, and very negligent of the Ornaments of the Soul, Meekness and Humility, which in the Sight of God, are the most precious and becoming Embellishments?

THIS I say, to correct that false Value which is commonly put upon these Things. For otherwise, we shou'd without doubt distinguish this from common Days by a neater and cleanlier Sort of Apparel. Every Solemnity requires it, but especially this. Who should we honour with the best of our Substance, but him who is the Giver of it? We know what strict Rules God prescrib'd in his ancient Church concerning the Things relating to his Worship. The Wood of the Tabernacle and Temple was to be of the choicest Cedar. The Vessels of the purest Gold; the Robes of the finest Linnen. The Persons of the Ministers were to be venerable, without Maim or Deformity; the Beafts for Sacrifice without Spot or Blemish, and the very best of What was the Substance of all the Flock. thele Shadows, but this: That God the Author and Giver of all good Things, will be ferv'd by holy Men in the purest and holiest Manner: Pamuly

Manner; and that we must be exact both as

to our Persons and Persormances?

WHEN you have put on your Dress in a fuitable Manner, Read some Portion of Holy Scripture, both before and after your Closet Devotions, and let your Reading be with due Reverence and Attention. Such a good Beginning of the Day, is the most likely Means to carry you thro' all the other Duties of it with Seriousness and Alacrity in your Devotions. He that is truly devout and religious in private, will be free from Hypocrific and

Offentation in Publick.

IF you are Master of a Family, they must have a share in your Domestick Worship; not only Wife and Children, but Servants too. They will never ferve you faithfully on the Week Days, if you suffer them to neglect the Duties of the Lord's-Day. Besides, How irreligious is it, to be less concern'd for God's Service than your own? If you will not keep a Servant that is unfaithful in your own Affairs, much less should you entertain one that is disobedient to God, how skilful foever he may be in other Matters. See then that your Servants and Children mispend not the Lord's-Day in Sloth or vain Recreations. ber you are accountable to God for those Souls he hath committed to your Charge. Take care therefore, that you add not to the Number of you own, by a Connivance at their Sins. that you hinder not your Temporal as well as Eternal Welfare, For the Worship of God in a Family

Family derives a Blessing upon it; even as God is said to bless the House of Obed-Edom for his Ark's Sake, which was kept there.

WHEN you Return from Church to your House, be as serious and religiously disposed as at your going out. Let your Discourse be rather of what you have heard, than of News or fecular Matters. It is the Practice of too many, as foon as ever they come out of the Church, to fall into a Conversation which savours not at all of that Place. When you happen into fuch Company, either give a Turn to their Discourse, or leave them. Where God gives particular Directions for the due Observance of his own Day, he restrains Men from speaking their own Words ; as well as finding their own Pleafure, and doing their own Immediately after you are come home, you would do well to refort to your Closet, and there render Thanks to God for the Opportunity he bath afforded you of enfoying the Ministry, and wholesom Instructions of his bleffed Word, befeeching him, That it may be as Seed fown in good Ground, which may bring forth Fruit unto Everlasting Life.

AND tho' you are not to turn this Day of Joy and Gladness into a Fast, tho' you should eat your Bread with a chearful and thankful Heart, yet I would advise you to Dine rather sparingly than plentifully, that you may attend on the remaining Duties of the Day without

[·] Maiab lvill. 13.

Heaviness. And therefore if your Circumstances will afford you a well furnish'd Table. confider God's Mercy in feeding you, while there are formany Lazarus's, that would be glad of the Crumbs that fall from your Table; and chuse rather to dispense the Surplusage among your poor Neighbours, whose Souls will bless you for such Refreshments, than to feast those who have no need; fo will you add Almfgiving to your Prayers, and offer a most ac-

ceptable Sacrifice to God.

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TALK of God's Word fitting down and rifing up; let your Heart be heavenly, and your Discourse savoury, season'd with Grace. Having thus refresh'd your Body, return to the Food of your Soul; read the Scriptures and other good Books, and make Proof of the Attention and Intellectuals of your Family, by questioning them about the Things they have heard that Day. This is recommended to us by the Practice of our bleffed Lord himself, who when he had fooken many Things to the Multitude in Parables, and was come into the House, he said to his Disciples, Have ye underflood all these Things? And again upon the like Occasion, b When he was alone, he expounded all Things to his Disciples.

WHEN the Evening Service calls you to Church, see that your whole Family accompany you thither, and attend with the fame Gravity and Devotion as before. Many think

Matt. xili. 5. b Mark iv. 34.

they have done enough, if they have spent the former Part of the Day at Church; but this is a great Mistake. God hath reserv'd to himself a Whole Day, not a Part of a Day. To alienate any part of it, is Robbery, and the worst Sort of Robbery, Sacrilege. Unless therefore you and your House appear the second Time in the Religious Assembly, you cannot be said

duly to fanctifie the Lord's-Day.

AFTER the whole Publick Service of the Day is over, take care of running into that common Irregularity of making impertinent and needless Visits. Hereby you not only neglect the well-ordering of your own Families, but interrupt the Methods of Devotion in others. If the Weather invite you to a Walk, let your Walk be for the fame End as Isaac's was, to Meditate. Walks and Visits are not proper Conclusions of this holy Day, except there be a mutual Disposition in the Company to converse in a Strain of Piety, and engage in such Conference as may lead towards Heaven, and help forward in the Way thither. But those that have Families to look after, will be best imploy'd in spending the remaining Hours of the Lord's-Day at home, in fuch a devotional Way of Reading and Discoursing, as was before recommended.

AND forasmuch as the Sanction of this Day extends to the Stranger within our Gate, it be hoves those who have Guests and Lodgers, to let none abide under their Roof, who are wilful Prophaners of it; and all that keep Inns and

and other publick Houses, must be careful not to entertain any licentious, diforderly Company. If there were not fuch Receptacles for loose Persons, their Reformation would be much more eafily effected; and therefore they will have a fad Account to give of their Domestick Charge, who for the sake of a little wretched Gain, suffer their Houses to be fill'd with shameful Debaucheries and Blasphemies, to the manifest Outrage of the Divine Majesty, and the Hindrance of his Holy Religion.

W E are all forward enough to restrain him, who shall offend against any Law wherein our own Interest is concern'd : Why then are we so flack and remis in vindicating the Honour of Almighty God? The Reason is plain; We have not that Flame of holy Zeal which ought to inspire every Christian Heart; We love our felves more than we love our God, and therefore have a quicker Sense of Offences committed against our selves than

Conference as may lead towards I mid finisgs Heplo rotairqor Partysi orlw hop Dix 13 3 & 15 our Time, challenges but one Day in feven to himself, itis great Wickedness in us to grudge him the whole, or prefume to defraud him of any Part of it. What strange Partiality is this to exact the Labours of fix entire Days of our Servants, and put off our Lord with the Service of three or four Hours on his Day? Such a falle Balance is Abomination to the Lord: It is a con-

villed Prophaners of it; and all thatilix work is temptuous . hais

which command us to * keep his Sabbaths and reverence his Sanctuaries; and inflicted Death on him, who should break in upon this facred Time with the Business of his Calling; but how much more doth he deserve it, who squanders it away either in Idleness, or in doing those things which are unlawful to

be done at any Time?

NEVER account it Rudeness to avoid trisling Company, or if ingaged in it, to silence unprofitable Discourse at this Time. Every thing we now think or speak should have some Tendency to Piety and Devotion. Nor must we barely cease from prohibited Labours, but while our Bodies rest, our Souls must be at work, in improving our spiritual Treasure, increasing in the Knowledge and Love of God, and finding still greater Pleasure in drawing near to him, whose Presence must make us happy to all Eternity.

No T but that there are some bodily Services commendable at this Time. To visit the Sick, to relieve the Poor and Needy, to do any good Office to those who are in pressing Want, and whose Case is such as cannot be delay'd. In order to this, we are permitted to take Journeys, and even to omit the publick Wonship of God, for the immediate Performance of such good Offices. Those who are otherwise persuaded, are not sufficiently acquainted

^{*} Exod. XXXI. 14.

with the Will of God, who hath declared that he prefers Mercy before Sacrifice; and our bleffed Lord, who came to do this Will with the greatest Exactness, did not forbear such Works on the Sabbath, notwithstanding the Offence which the Scribes and Pharifees took at him for it.

IN your Evening's Retirement at Home. Enter into your Closet, and there lay open your Soul before GOD in PRAYER. Here likewife, Meditate on what you have heard, admire the Glory of God in his Works, the Goodness of God in his Providence, and the infinite Mercy of God in his Promifes: Certainly Meditation is one great Duty of the Sabbath, without which, to hear the Word of God only, is but to fwallow our Meat without chewing it. Thus if we endeavour to keep holy the Lord's-Day, the Lord will fanctify his Day and his Ordinances unto us, and by them convey fo much Joy and Comfort unto our Souls, that they shall be a Temporary Heaven unto us, and fit us for that Eternal Sabbath, where we shall continually give Praise and Glory unto him that sitteth upon the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever and

THE Publick Crainances are not to be neglected upon pretence of ferving God in private; as our Lord faith in another Case, These Things ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. With

Time as Religiously at Home, as you can at Church; that you Read, Pray, Catechize, and the like: But let me tell you, You do all this out of Season; you mistake and misplace your Duty, adhering to one Part of it in plain Contempt and Neglect of the other. This is like robbing a Man of a greater Sum, and paying him a less. You disobey the Command of God in neglecting the publick, and so cannot expect his Blessing upon your private Acts

of Religion.

HAVE you conceived any Dislike of your Minister? It may be he hath disobliged you by doing no more than what was his Duty to do. But let him be supposed to have real Infirmities, either in his Intellectuals or Morals: vet the constant Course of Divine Service is fuch, as if duly attended on, may abundantly profit you from his Mouth. The Efficacy of the Word and Sacraments depends not on the Parts or Virtue of the Minister, but on the Grace of God accompanying the Piety and Attention of the Hearer, A precious Treasure may be conveyed to you in an earthen, despicable Vessel; and that God who fed Elijah by a Rayen, can with the same facility, convey Heavenly Manna to your Soul by the Offices of an unworthy Minister.

But the sober and intelligent Christian will by no means prefer the Minister's Compositions, which we usually style Preaching, before the Heavenly and more immediate Acts of Worship in the Publick Prayers. For Prayer is not only the Means, but the End too, as being a Moral Duty, a Branch of Natural Religion, whereby the Creature acknowledgeth his Dependance on God, and withal confesses the Power, the Wisdom, the Goodness, the Mercy of his Great Creator and Benefactor, imploring his Aid, and giving Thanks for his Blessings. So that 'tis an Act of great Humility and Gratitude, and of Love too, whereby the Soul afcends to God in devout and affectionate Breathings and Aspirations, Besides, 'tis also an Act of Repentance, in confessing and begging Pardon for our Sins; fo that there is a great deal of Morality in Prayer; for which it is to be regarded as a Thing intrinsically good in it felf, as being directly, and as fuch, the Service and Worship of God.

BUT now PREACHING, though it be an Ordinance of God, and a Means of Grace, yet is it no more than a Means; and accordingly is no farther valuable, than as it serves in order to Prayer, and other Christian Duties, to build Men up in Faith and Holiness of Life, which is what we properly mean by Edification. Hearing is not in it felf a Religious Act, as Prayer is; nor is it an Act of Charity to our Neighbour, nor is the Hearer himself the better for it, any otherwise than as he designs well in it, and directs it to a right End, and in some good measure attains the End of it. And therefore to place all Religion

in Hearing of Sermons, or to rest in it as a Completion of our Duty, is to mistake the Scaffold for the Building, to confound the Means with the End, and to prefer Precepts above Practice; as they do, who come to Church, and endure the Prayers only for the fake of the Sermon: I fay, This is to prefer the Means before the End, which is contrary to all the Principles of Reason as well as Religion: and I must needs add, A strange way of ferving God, who is the God of Order, and not of Confusion, as the Apostle observes in a Case not much unlike this. But this it is to have a Zeal for Religion, and not know where to place it, nor how to impley it, and fo fet up our own Notions and Prejudices it the Room of it.

W E must not think we are at the End of our Duty when we have heard a Sermon, though never so attentively; but we must lay up in our Hearts those Instructions and good Rules which are then given us, and apply them faithfully to the directing of our Lives. Therefore whenever you come to the Phylician of your Soul, do the fame thing as you would with the Physician of your Body. You don't come only to hear him talk, and tell you what will cure you; but you intend to follow his Prescriptions in order to the Recovery of your Health and if you fail of Sucsess'by neglecting to observe Rules, you acknowledge the Blame. must lye at your own Door. Be as just to your Soul as you are to your Body, and conclude,

That without serious Practice, those Things you learn will rise up in Judgment against you, and make your Condemnation so much the heavier; for so St. James affures you, That if you are Hearers only, and not Doers of the Word, you deceive your own Souls.

A CHURCH is a Society of Christians, gather'd together for the publick Worship of God, in the due Administration of the Sacraments, Preaching of the Word, Prayer, and Praising of God, in order to promote Sanctity of Life here, and attain everlasting Happiness hereafter, which are the great Ends for which a Church was constituted.

WHEN you are upon your Way to Church, say with the Holy Platmist, how amights are thy Tabernacles, O Lord! My Soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the Courts of the Lord: nop Flesh crieth out for the Living God of I will go into his Tabernacle, and fall lom on my Knees before his Ecotsfool.

WHEN you approach the Church-door, consider you are now entring the Presence-Chamben of the Great King of the World, whose Throne of Glory is in Heaven above, but his Throne of Grace is in his Temple here below; lift up then your Heart, and say, Surely the Lord is in this Place! d How dreadful is this Place! This

Gen. xxviii. 16, 17.

is none other but the House of God! this is the Gate of Heaven! 2 Blessed are they that dwell in thy House! they will be always praising thee! When God appeared to Moses in a Flame of Fire, out of the midft of a Bush, he said to him, & Draw not nigh hither : Put off thy Shoes from off thy Feet, for the Place whereon thou standest, is holy Ground. The Mahometans have so great a Reverence for their Places of Worship, that in token of Respect, they take off their Sandals before they come into them. How much more should we reverence the Sanctuary of the True God? With what Humility should we prefent our selves before him? With what Devotion should we tread his Courts, and compass his Holy Altar?

WHEN you come to your Seat, at your first kneeling down, address your self to the Almighty for his Grace and Acceptance, in these or the like Ejaculations: c Let the Words of my Mouth, and the Meditation of my Heart, be now and ever acceptable in thy Sight, O Lord my Strength and my Redeemer! d Lord, open thou mine Eyes, that I may see the wondrous Things of thy Law. Make me to understand the Way of thy Precepts.

AFTER these preparatory Acts of Adoration, don't presently relax your Thoughts, and imagine you have done Homage enough to the infinite Majesty you come to worship. We read, that the Elders of Israel trembled at

d Pfalm exix. 18. b Exod. iii. 5. c Pfalm xix. 14.

Samuel

Samuel when he came among them; and shall not we much more tremble at the Presence of Him that is higher than the highest? The holy Angels cover their Faces, as not able to behold the Brightness of the Divine Glory. If fuch awful Regard be paid by Angels, who are themselves Holy and Honourable in a very eminent Degree, what Abasement can be low enough for us, who appear with so many fin-ful Defilements? If then you have any intermediate Space between your private Ejaculations, and the Beginning of the publick Service, let it not be fpent in talking or gazing about you; but in improving your Devotion by reading or meditating, that fo, whenever the Minifter begins, you may be duly composed to joyn with him, and to go through the whole Office with less wandring or disorder of Mind. Be not curious to know what passes in the Congregation, and where are the finest Dreffes; but govern your Eyes fo, as that they may not divert your Ear from the Minister, nor your Heart from GOD, the Object of your Worship. Remember that your Business here is to converse with Him; therefore shut out all Thoughts of the World, and fet a Guard upon all your Senses, that no treacherous. Thought steal in to betray you. God requires the Intention of the Heart and Thoughts in his Worship: without that, the outward Adorations of the Body will avail nothing.

IF fome Peoples Bodies were as much out of the Church as their Minds, I am afraid we should have but thin Congregations. Nay, they can speak without thinking. They can draw near to God with their Lips, when their Hearts are far from him; running after their Pleasures, or worldly Affairs. But however Men may be imposed upon, God is not to be mocked. They hear the Language of the Tongue, but He that of the Heart. And therefore think not to conceal your felf under the Vizard of Hypocrifie; but conceive God, as he really is, always looking upon you, and taking an Account, not only of the Matter of the Actions you perform, but of the Manner how you perform them. Don't think therefore to pass some bodily Adorations upon him. instead of the spiritual Sacrifice of the Heart: For he searcheth the Heart, and trieth the Reins, and will render to every Man, not only according to his Works and Words, but even according to his very Thoughts. Take then special, Care to keep your Mind intent upon every Part of the Service. Be as humble in the Confession of your Sins, and as exalted in celebrating the Divine Praises, as you possibly can. However, let not spiritual Worship supersede the outward Indications of it; but be upon your Knees at your Prayers, and Stand up when you render Praises to God.

Leffons, and Commercians

In the Entrance upon our Church Service, the Sentences of Scripture, and the Exhortation, ferve excellently to excite Mens Hearts to a devout Performance of the following Holy Duties. Among which, the Confession of Sins properly comes first, because our Sins have made a Breach and Distance between God and our Souls; they hinder our Prayers from afcending to him; they restrain his Blessings from coming down upon us. This Impediment therefore must first be removed, before we can perform other Services with good Effect. And to be upon our Knees in Confession, is the most natural and agreeable Posture, because the Abasement of our Bodies expresses the Humility of our Minds

NEXT after Confession, follows the Assocution, to be pronounced by none but the Minister; the People should by no means repeat it after him, as some do very injudiciously, but only receive it with Re-verence. Tis God's Pardon declared by a proper Minister to the People. But towards the Conclusion of it, you may fay to your Welf ?

LORD, let this Pardon pronounced by the Priest, be sealed to my Soul, and convey to me the

Remission of all my past Sins.

AND now I liave mention'd the People's pronouncing the Absolution after the Minister, I must farther observe, That many read the Exhortation, Lessons, and Commandments after him

him with a loud Voice; which is not only offensive to others, but likewife an Invasion of the Prieff's Office.

THE Pfalms, which are Parts of our daily Service, are of all Scripture the fullest of Devotion, and abound much in Praifes and Thanksgivings, and therefore to be read standing, as the most suitable Posture for such fort of Religious Offices: that the Erection of our Body might more fully express the Eleva-

tion of our Mind.

WHAT fincere Christian can be ashamed publickly, and with an audible Voice, to make Confession of the Holy Catholick Faith; it being a Duty we owe both to Goo and Man; that is, an Act of Divine Worship, and a Declaration that we hold the fame Faith with all good Christians? And therefore it is required of us, that we not only Believe with the Heart unto Righteoufnels, but likewife make Confession with the Mouth unto Salvation.

WHERE-EVER our Prayers are divided into those small Portions we call Versicles, the People are to attend to that Part which the Minister utters, as well as to that which they are injoyn'd to pronounce themselves. What the Minister prays vocally, the same must the People pray mentally; and so they make the whole Service one continued Act of Devotion.

But you must not repeat those Prayers and Collects with an audible Voice, which are to be said by the Minister alone. This is contrary to the Design and Rule of the Church, which always directs People when they are to speak out, and consequently commands them at all other Times to be silent, and to speak to God in their Hearts, or with such a motion of their Lips, as may give no Disturbance to others.

Our excellent Litures is fo far from favouring of any Popish Superstition (as some have injuriously objected against it) that it was composed by the most eminent Prelates and Instruments of the Reformation, in the Reign of King Edward VI. who very judicioully and pioully contrived the Prayers always to begin with some Attribute of Almighty God, and to end in the Name and Mediation, of Jesus Christ. Their Style is admirably fitted both for imploring the Mercies of God, and rendring him unfeigned Thanks for the fame. The Words are grave, and well fuited to exalt our Thoughts to the highest Pitch of Adoration, Zeal, and Love; infomuch, that Men of the best Sense and Learning have been moved to Tears in the Use of them. And they are but few in each Prayer, that when we have faid one, we may proceed to the next with renew'd Attention and Warmth of Devotion.

Dr. Hammond's Life.

CHAP. I. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 0149

ACCEPT, O LORD, the Prayers and Praises of thy Servants; and grant, that thy Words may take deep Root in our Hearts, that so they may bring forth the Fruits of good living, to the Honour and Praise of thy Name; through JESUS CHRIST our Lord. Amen.

BESIDES this Weekly Tribute of Time to God, there are certain Annual Festivals to be observed in Memory of some special Mercies: fuch as the Birth and Resurrection of our Lord, the Descent of the Holy Ghost, the Anniverfaries of the Evangelists and Apostles. These Days are set apart for the solemn Wor-Thip of God, and a Service of Thankfgiving for the particular Bleffing we then commemorate. To doubt of the Lawfulness of such Solemnities. is very unreasonable, as tho' it were Superstition in us thus to glorify God, for making the Apoftles and first Preachers of the Gospel, Instruments of revealing to us Christ Jesus and the Way of Salvation. To fay, That it contradicts the Commandment, which bids us work Six Days, is as groundless; for that is only a Permission to us to work Six Days, if our Necessities require it: But otherwise, we may spend as much Time in the publick Worship of God, as our Circumstances will permit. The Jews had feveral Holy-Days, which were not of Divine Institution; as that of the Feast of the Dedication of the Temple; and our Lord was pleased to observe them, and consequently approv'd of them.

AND

The SUM of the PARTH.

AND as we are bound to frequent and thankful Commemorations of the Divine Favours, for must we sometimes be as publick in our Humiliations and penitent Confessions of Sins, both National and Personal, which provoke God to remove his Blessings, and instict the forest Punishments upon us. We must be heartily forry for such Provocations, testifie our Detestation and Abhorrence of our selves for them, earnestly deprecate the Divine Vengeance due to them, and implore the Aids of preventing Grace to keep us to a stricter Obedience, and Love of God for the Time to come. And to this purpose there are certain Days of Fasting and Humiliation appointed by the Charch.



To doubt of the Lawfulne's of firsh Solemnities.

Dedication of the Temple; and our Lord was bleafed to observe them, and confequently approved of them.

Divine indications as the of



CHAP. II.

distant I har OF OUR

DUTY and SERVICE to GOD

ON THE

WEEK-DAYS:

OR, THE

DAILY EXERCISE of a CHRISTIAN.



cugat

S foon as you Awake in the Morning, Fix your Mind on the Goodness of GOD: Let the Thoughts of Him and his Word enter first into your Heart, and take Possession of it

before any fecular Cares invade it; fo will you find a better Disposition to Piety and Virtue

all the Day following.

CONSECRATE the Work of every DAY with the Service of the Supream King and Governor: Offer him the First-Fruits of your Renewed Life, the Morning Sacrifice of Praise and Adoration, breaking forth in the Transports of the Divine Psalmist:

EARLY in the Morning will I direct my Brayer to thee, O Lord, and will look up. b It is a good Thing to give Thanks unto the Lord, and to fing Praises unto thy Name, O thou Most High! To shew forth thy Loving-kindness in the Morning, and thy Faithfulness every Night. c Praise the Lord, O my Soul ! while I live will I praise the Lord: yea, as long as I have my Being, I will sing Praises unto my God. d Every Day will I give Thanks unto thee, and praise thy Name for ever and ever.

Thus when the Morn in Crimson drest, Breaks through the Chambers of the East, My Mind in thankful Praises Shall arise, Like Incense, or the Morning Sacrifica.

WHILE you are putting on your Rayment, think on the General Refurrection of the Last Day, when this Corruptible Shall put on Incorruption, and this Mortal put on Immortality. Let this Meditation forward you to your Prayers, and inspire your Heart with Reverence and Zeal, remembring the awful Majesty you are approaching, the great Inspector of all the World, who fearcheth the Heart, and tryeth the Reins; who vouchfafes you this farther Opportunity of bowing your Knees to him, which you know not but that it may be, and

² Pfalm v. 3. Pfalm xcii. 1, 2. 9 Pfalm cxlvi. f Pfalm cxly, 2.

ought therefore so seriously to be imploy'd, as if it really were your laft. With this kind of Homage must you recognize your Omnipotent Sovereign; Whe is the Lord God, and worship thou Him. By frequently repeating these devout Acknowledgments, you will gain a quick Sense of your Obligations to keep his Statutes and observe his Laws (you will see the Reason

and Importance of your Duties, and acquire a Facility and Satisfaction in the Difcharge of ers, the Reading Joine Partion of Hol-medt

noW E are Daily contracting new Debts, which render us obnoxious to our Judge. Our Arrears to God and our own Souls are every Day growing upon us. And shall we not at least obviate the Arrest of Justice, by timely fuing out for a Pardon and Release? Our Lives and Comforts are continually furrounded with Difeases and Deaths, whose Arrows fly at Midnight, and destroy at Noonday; and shall we not at all Times, whether going out, or coming in, lying down, or rifing up, remember to put our felves under the Protection of Divine Providence ? Shall we not intreat God with our whole Hearts. To lift up the Light of his Countenance upon us, to guide and direct us in all our Ways, that we may please him, upon whose Favour our Happinels depends We know that we are daily dying, that Death is every Moment advancing towards usquand can we of all Men imagine we shall be exempted from the common Fate! and not rather address pur felves to God in HAVING that

that excellent Prayer? Lord, make us to know our End; and so teach us to number your Days, that we may apply our Hearts anto Misson? And as we pray unto God, so must we praise him for all his Benefits; for his Hatherly Care in giving his holy Angels charge lover us, and guarding about our Beds while we stept, and affording us another Day for the great Works of our Salvation and may be some requiled to

IF your Time will permit, aild to your Prayers, the Reading some Portion of Holy Scripture, with that Reverence and Attention which the awful Prefence of God, who is more especially near you at fuch times, will justly command. By this your Faith will be Grengthen'd, and your Repentance improved. Be fure you don't this of this Act of Hiery, upon trivial Pretences, as if you wanted LeD fure, when you have enough and to fpare. Remember that God knows all your Affairs; and that he harh given this fact Life only to prepare you for that which is Everlasting: co this End all your Concerns, whether of Profit or Bleafure, must be subservient. Abridge the Night then, if you cannot intrench upon the Day; and take fomerhing from your Sleep, to add to your Divine Imployment ban shing

the Church as a fingular Bleffing to the Place where they are Daily used, that your Bresence may be exemplany to others, that your may been your Testimony to their sacred Worth, land feather a lasting Bleffing to your felfishereby, but I said

in his Fear all the Day long. Be strict in the Regulation of your Thoughts, Words, and Actions. Bring the good Resolutions of your Retirement, into the Practice of your active Life. Be just and upright in your Dealings, diligent in your Calling, innocent in your Diversions, charitable in your Treatment of others: In all your Ways acknowledge your most righteous Law-giver, and set him before your Eyes in every thing you do.

In all your Actions confider what will be acceptable to God, rather than what is for your own carnal Satisfaction and Advantage. Prefer that which will bear the Tryal of his Judgment, before that which may feem good in your own or the World's Eyes. We answer not the End of our Reading, Hearing and Praying, unless they make lafting Impressions upon us, which may abide by us in our Worldly Affairs : fuch as may leave no Darkness nor Gloominess in our Minds, no Bribery or Corruption in our Conscience, no Obstinacy or Peevishness in our Will, no Disorder or Irregularity in our Affections, Above all, let those most important Words of our Bleffed Lord, be continually speaking in your Heart: What shall it profit a Man, if he gain the mbole World, and lose his own Soul ? or what shall a Man give in Exchange for his and repair your Strength for the Buline June!

your Table excite you to praise tive lines. Do-

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LET your Conversation be seasoned with Salt, fays the fame Sacred Oracle; which hath a fovereign Quality of feafoning other Things to which it is applied. Let us befeech God that in all our Communications with others, we may be fo far from corrupting them, that they may receive Profit by us, and we no Harm from them; that by an easie, chearful, and gracious Deportment, we may win others to the Love of that good Spirit, which we profess to be led by. Yet must we not Cast our Pearls before Swine, fuch profligate Persons whose foul Manners are not to be corrected by any wholesome Admonitions; but avoid them as carefully as we would the most infectious and pestilential Disease.

VENTURE not Abroad, till you have befought God that he would be your Guide,
and lead you in a fafe and good Way, defending you from all Dangers ghostly and bodily.
In vain do you fortify your self against the innumerable Hazards of mortal Life, except his
Fatherly Care be over you, in your going out,
and in your coming in. He keepeth all our Bones,
so that not one of them is broken.

Observe such Temperance in Eating and Drinking, as that you may not exceed either in the Quantity or Quality of your Diet. Let your Meals be so moderate as may serve their just Ends, to refresh your exhausted Spirits, and repair your Strength for the Business and Duties of your Life. Let the Provisions of your Table excite you to praise the liberal Do-

nor of all your good Things, who hath endow'd Man with a Dominion over the Beafts of the Field, the Fowls of the Air, the Fishes of the Sea, and every green Herb, that they should all supply him with Food and Suftenance. Beware that you turn not this Grace into Wantonness by feeding too plentifully, or fludying too much Delicacy in your Meats and Drinks, out had considered for furn

In the Business of your Calling, encourage your felf, that you are in the Way of your Duty, and depend upon God who hath appointed you to this Station, for his Bleffing in it. Revolve in your Mind, the many difficult Occurrences and Perplexities thro' which the good Hand of God hath graciously led you; look up to him for that Discretion, to which he doth instruct not only the Husbandman but the Iradesman; that Prudence which directs the Way, and which is promifed to the good Man for the ordering of his Affairs. I had no managed and

IN Matters of Gain, do not use all the Arts which Custom may feem to authorize. He that will always walk upon the Brink, is in great Danger of falling: He that will do the utmost of what he may, will sometime or other be tempted to do what he should not. Provide things honest in the Sight of all Men; that is, endeavour all you can to do that which is nuft and equitable to all, and not as the Way of the World is, to contrive how to over-reach and outwit other People. It is not enough for a Man to be satisfied of his own Integrity, M 3

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but he must abstain from all Appearance of Evil. He must not only injure no Man, not only do things which are barely just, but like-wise things which are laudable and of good Report: Acting up to that Rule of our Lord, who commands, that our Light should so shine before Men, that they seeing our good Works, may glorifie our Father which is in Heaven: Intimating, that we must not so much consult the Advantage of our own Reputation, as the Glory of God, and the Interest of Religion in our Christian.

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In the Management of our Affairs, that which is necessary to render them successful and comfortable to us, is a high Regard to God's Glory, as our chief End in all we do. This fanctifies but Endeavours, and carries us thro' them with Chearfulness. On fuch a Principle we can repose our Minds, and expect every Event with Courage, as being resolved that what pleafeth God shall likewife pleafe us. By fuelt a Refignation and Acquiescence in Providence we shall arm our selves against the Sting of a Multitude of anxious Cares and Fears. Our Minds will be raifed above the little Objects of Sense, and no Troubles or Diffresses shall be able to beat us from our Anchor of Hope in God. Do we believe that the Love of God extends it felf to us in all Varieties of Fortune, however contrary to our prefent Defires or Interests? Let us then entirely commit

Man to be fireshed of his over the the

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our felves to him as to a most gracious Father. faying with Holy David, What Time I am atraid, I will trust in thee; and not doubting but we thall find the Truth of that Promise, that All things hall work together for Good to them requent Fixeulations, render him.bod svoltadt

OPPORTUNITIES of faying and doing that which is Good, can rarely be wanting to us, if we have but a ready and willing Mind; which we must obtain of God by diligent Prayer. Let us therefore be confrant and earnest Petitioners, That by his boly Inspiration we may think those things that be Good, and by his merciful Guid-

ance may perform the fame. and of the day of the

WHAT little Reason have we to be averse to Retirement, or at a Loss how to dispose of our felves, when we are left alone, and have no Business upon our Hands? If we did but imploy those vacant Minutes in Searches after God, and the Society of the Bleffed above, we could never be less alone than when retired to divine Contemplation, and converfe with heavenly Objects. Thus improving our Spiritual Acquaintance in our Retirements from the World Solitude could never be irksome ean relovee in him, where or flow one

W E must not limit our Devotions to the Morning only, but after the Example of holy David, c mail on God all the Day long that is our Defires must be rowardshim the Motions of our Souls, like the Fire on the Altar, must and raile themselves to Go

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afpire to him, we must maintain a quick and lively Sense of his Omnipresence, infinite Id flice, and universal Goodness we must obferve the Conduct of his unerring Wildom in all the Occurrences of Life, and by short and frequent Ejaculations, render him Praise and Thanks, and beg his Direction, Affiffance, and Bleffing in all our honest Undertakings. This is, with the devout Platmift, To fet God always before us, to have our Eyes ever upon him; and with the Apostle, to pray without ceasing. Not that we should be always in our Closets, or on our Knees; it is not the length of our Prayers. which prevails fo much with God, as the Frequency and Ardor of them, when we exert them, as spiritual Darts, to repel the Assaults of Satan and the wicked World. We muft be habitually disposid, always ready to afcend up to Heaven in religious Thoughts; the Business of our Vocations must not engage us fo far, as to alienate our Hearts from God, and devote them to the World. Man shall not live by Bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God. We then most truly live, when our Souls can rejoyce in him, when we find a Delight and Pleafure in Communion with him. and conform our felves to his Image by continual Acts of Holiness and Goodness. When in the Buliness of our Calling, the fecret workings of our Hearts are Heaven-wards and raise themselves to God in silent Breathings unheard and unobserv'd by the World. This w M alpire

This holy Life spent in devout and constant Communion with God, is truly to live the most pleasant most comfortable Life, mortal

Man is capable of on this fide Heaven.

How fadly then do those Men pervert the End of Living, and defroy their own Souls, who are wholly fenfual in their Imaginations, and live without God in the World! And what prodigious Multitudes are there, who have no Notion of that fweet Communion with God we have been fpeaking of! who lye down and rife up, go out and come in, in the constant Pursuit of the Profits and Pleafures of the Body, without God in all their Thoughts! Tho' they feed upon his Bounty. and prolong their Life from Day to Day by his merciful Long-fuffering, yet they feem not to perceive it; they own no Dependance on him. non appear at all follicitous to preferve themfelves in his Favour.

How abfurd and wretched is their Folly, who Rife early, and go late to Rest, and eat the Bread of Carefulness, denying themselves the necessary Refreshments and Comforts of Life, only that they may encrease a useless Heap of Wealth! This is to prefer the Means before the End, and to possess, rather than to enjoy. Others again make themselves really miserable. out of an imaginary Fear that they shall be fo. They anticipate those Wants by anxious Sollicitude, which might be prevented

[·] Ffai. cxxvii. 2.

by a timely Supply, could they but practifer that Patience and Affiance in God, which our Lord recommends, when he fays, Take wen thought what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink or wherewithabye Shall be cloathed, For your Heavenly Father knowesh that ye have need of all these things; and he on whom all living Things want for their Support, will not deny these needful Succours to his own Children; who according to his Will, leek his Kingdom and Glory in the first Place; who having Food and Raiment, can be content therewith, not covering those superfluous Riches, which are apt to lead Men into Temptation and a Snare, ministring to many extravagant Lufts, which drown Men in Perdition and Destruction. prolong bas

But that you may persevere in the Duties of the Day with better Success, Be mindful of those Things which were the Subject of your Morning. Supplications. You pray'd for the Inspiration and Guidance of God's Holy Spirit; keep your Mind pure, your Thoughts holy, your Body chaste and temperate, that so it may be an agreeable Temple for the Holy Ghost. You pray'd for assisting Grace, to fortifie you against Temptations; do not then give way to them when they offer themselves; much less let your Mind wander and seek out the occasions of sinning. You asked for a Spirit of Resignation and Conformity to God's Will; let this Mind appear in you under every Dispensation

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Matt. vi. 31.

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of his Providence. Be content to want those outward good Things which he is pleas'd to deny you, and never use indirect Means to help your self in any Case. You pray'd for those social Graces which respect your Neighbour, that you might love him as your self; be not then forward to speak Evil of him; nor pleas'd with his ill Fame when you hear it, nor willingly give Credit to it; but rather hope it may be a Mistake, or Calumny which Time will consute.

DID you heartily defire God to Forgive your Enemies ? Do you then offer them all reafonable and fitting Terms of Reconciliation. Remember how fhort-lived a Christian's Animolities must be to If you will observe the Apo-Stolick Rule, you must not suffer the Sun to go down upon your Wrath. If your Confcience tells you, you have wronged another, acknowledge your Offencey fatisfie him as well as you can for any Damage he hath fuffain'd thereby. and affure him of fair Treatment for the Time to come. If he hath wronged you, and refuses, when required, to do you Justice, tho' there are particular Cases wherein you may (and fometimes must) demand Reparation at Law. yet you must not presume to be your own Avenger; in fo doing, you would rebel against God, who hath put the Sword of Justice into the Hand of the publick Magistrate, His own Vice-gerent. It is your Part and Duty to pray to God for the Forgiveness of his Offence, and the Change of his Heart to a Better Temper; Practice

and when Opportuity ferves, refuse not to do thim any kind Office, with a chearful and ready Mind. For he that doth Good to his unrelenting Enemy, gives the best Proof that God is his Father, who makes his Sun to rife on the Evil as well as on the Good, and fends his Rain both on the full and on the Unjust And as God doth not repute us wicked Men for the ordinary, and fcarce avoidable Infirmities of human Nature fo neither must you presently esteem that Man your Enemy, who accidentally fays or does fome harfh thing; fince you your felf want the Forgiveness not only of God, but Mah, in many Offences of too free and unguarded Conversation. The most cogent Morive to mutual Forbearance in fuch Cases, is this; That we cannot lye down at Night in Affurance of God's Favour, unless we are at Peace with Men; nor in Faith ask Forgiveness of him, except we forgive our Brethren thein Trefpaffes. on ogama (vns rol nao

WHEN the Business of the Day is over, Set apart a convenient Portion of Time, for your Evening Devotions: For which prepare your felf by Examination and Meditation, with fome proper Part of Holy Scripture. In your Review of the Day patt confider, a. What Sins and Failings you have been guilty of, and be humbled for them. 2. What Mercies and Bleffings demand a Sacrifice of Thankfgiving. 3. What Croffes have exercised your Patience and Submission. 104. What Improvements you have made in Divine Knowledge and virtuous Practice. Practice. If you have proceeded well to Day, don't lose Ground to Morrow; but if ill, red deem the Time past by the well spending of what remains. 5. Observe how your Devotions have been perform'd, and hence judge of the State of your Soul. And for the sincere and impartial Discharge of this Examination, let that of Solomon encourage you; He that covereth his Sins, shall not prosper; but whose confesses and forsaketh them, shall find Mercy.

THE Example of our First Parents is a Proof to us, how prone Man is to cover his Sins; or if detected, to extenuate and leffen them, to transfer the Blame from himfelf to others; nay, fometimes to varnish Sin over with false Colours, and pretend it was his Duty to do that which is the plain Transgreffion of it. But in vain do we trifle with God. who fees the most hidden Thoughts and Intentions of our Hearts, and requireth Truth in the inward Parts. He expects we should impartially arraign our felves for all our Sins: If we refuse to do this, he will set them all in order before us, at that Day when he shall bring every idle Word and evil Thought, as well as fecret Action, into Judgment A It behoves us therefore in our daily Examination, diligently to recollect all our Sins, to confess every Particular, and to implore God's merciful Pardon. that fo we may prevent the strict and terrible Account of the last Day; which will best be

Prov. xxviii, 32, .eg.ix 100 2 .g.xixo .fold & done

done by examining our Confciences every Night concerning the Occurrences of the Day past, to humble our Souls before God for whatever we find amis, and to refolve by the Affiftance of Divine Grace to correct that Error for the Time to come la Thus vigilant was hely David in the Course of his Life: I called mine own Ways to remembrance, and turned my Feet unto thy Testimonies. I made haste, and prolonged not the Time, to keep thy Commandments. Confider of what dangerous Consequence it may prove to omit this daily Examination. If you lee down in the Guilt of but one unrepented Sin, there is a Polibility of your loing Heaven by it. For who can tell that you shall ever have an Opportunity to repent of it, or live to fee the Light of another Sun? Such frail Creatures are we, that even the best of our Works are much debafed with Imperfections; how careful then should we be, to condemn our felves for every known and apparent Sin we commit? Since, as the Apoltle afforces us, of If we would judge our selves, we fould not be judged of the Lord.

Bur if neither the Examples of the best of

Men, nor the Admonitions of God himself can perfuade us to fer about this fo important a Duty; will it avail any thing to urge the Practice of meer Heathens in this Particular? Met I shall just acquaint you that Seneca walked by elis Rule, and Pythagoras prescribed it, as you

^{*} Prov. xxviii. 31, .tg .iivxx .vorq . Pfal, cxix, 3,

may learn from this Golden Verles at the end of this Chapter.

To facilitate this Work to you, enter fometimes into fuch Meditations as thefe: I have a Principle of Life within me, which can never be extinguished. I must be eternally happy or milerable hereafter, according as I behave my felf here. After a fhort Time allow'd me on Earth, to prepare for another World, my Soul shall be divested of this Body, and live for some time in a separate State. Afterwards. my Body shall be raised again, and be reunited to my Soul. I shall be the fame Man for Substance as I am at prefent: I shall be judged according to the Works I have done in this mortal Life and an irreverable Sentence shall confign the to a State of Happiness or Mifery, wherein I shall abide for ever. without any farther Change or Alterainjoying that found Conference which isnoire

Il A T this Reflection make a Stand, and look into the boundless Ocean of ETERNITY; think what amazing Changes you must in a short time undergo, and how nearly it concerns you to be always prepared for them. Let these Things be ingraven upon your Heart, and you cannot easily be at a Loss for things Meditations at any time.

mend your foll again to God, reposing securely under his Protection, submitting intirely to his Disposal, and trusting your Soul in his Hands, as a faithful Creator and Preserver,

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who will cause you to awake again, either in this Life, or that which is Everlasting.

THE more Days you spend according to this good Method, the more correct will your Life be, the easier will the Duty grow, the more Pleasure you will take in it; you will not dispense with your self for the Observance of it; you will only be sorry that you begun to live so no sooner. If you are not already in some such Course, lose no Time in bringing your self to it.

When we have the Testimony of our Conscience to tell us in the Words of St. Paul, That in Simplicity and godly Sincerity, not with stessify Wisdom, but by the Grace of God, we have this Day had our Conversation in the World; we may then lie down in Peace at Night, in Peace with God, with our Selves, with the World; in a sweet Composure and Calmness of Mind, injoying that sound Conscience which is the softest Pillow, being a continual Rest, as well as Feast.

REMEMBER that many who go well to Bed, shall never rise again, 'till they are awaken'd with the amazing Sound of the last Trumpet. Therefore go to your Bed as to your Grave, commit Soul and Body to the never-sleeping Vigilance of your Almighty Guardian. Take Leave of the World and all its Concerns, and resign your self in the Words of the Holy Psalmist;

his Dispotal, and trusting your Soul in his lifething as a faithful Creater and Preferrer,

I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep; for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in Safety. Return to God as thy Rest, O my Soul: for he hath dealt bountifully with thee.

THUS Religiously should you open every Day, and close it again with the Word of God

and Prayer.

AS we put off our Cloaths when we go to Bed, so must we put off our Bodies when we come to die. Death strips us, and sends us naked out of the World, as we came into it. It dissolves the Union between Soul and Body : leaving the one among Earth and Worms, and fending the other to the Father of Spirits, from whom it was derived. Our Grave-Cloaths are but a kind of Night-Dress; O that we could think of putting on the one with as much Ease as we do the other! In this Bed we rest for some few Hours; but when our Bodies come to be lodged in the Grave, they shall rest 'till the joyful Morning of the Resurrection dawns in upon them. Thus may your Bed put you in mind of the Grave, your Sleep of Death, your Waking of the Resurre-Ction.

WHEN you awake in the Night, and Sleep departs from your Eyes, keep out evil Thoughts, which will then builty haunt you, by fixing your Meditations on God and Heavenly Things, and fweetly meditate on Him in the Night-Watches. Remember that the

Pfalm iv. 8.

*Keeper of Israel never sumbereth nor sleepeth; and that be the Darkness is no Darkness with him, but the Night is as clear as the Day. The Darkness and Light to him are both alike. Thus David's Eyes prevented the Night-watches, that he might be occupied in God's Word. He called to remembrance his Song, and in the Night he communed with his own Heart, and searched out his Spirits. And his Character of a Blessed Man is, That he meditates in the Law of God both Day and Night.

MOTIVES taken from the Consideration of DEATH, to excite us to a Christian Conversation.

Consider every Day, as not knowing but that it may be your last, That when your last shall come indeed, you may not be found unprepared. Your Life is in continual Suspence and Uncertainty; it hangs by a slender Thread which is easily cut: What manner of Person then ought you to be in all Holy Conversation and Godliness? You know not in what Hour your Lord cometh, and therefore you ought to look for him every Hour. Imagine that you see his Harbinger Death running before him, which is the surest way to keep you in a due Expectation of him. In the Morning when you rise, think he may summon you before Night: In the Evening when you lye down, conceive him calling upon you as he

Pfalm cxxi. 4. Pfalm cxxxix. 12. Luke xii. 36. doth

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doth in the Gospel, to have your Loins girt, and be ready, even at Midnight or at Cock-

crowing, to meet your Lord.

Bur alas! instead of reckoning every Hour our laft, we vainly promife our felves many Years of Life and Health still to come, and value our felves, with the Rich Man in the Golpel, upon our great Estates and Provisions. But how eafily would our high Looks and proud Hearts be humbled, if we had but an habitual Faith, that Duft we are, and unto Duft we must return? " Norhing so effectual (saith "St. Bernard) to make a Man have a low "Opinion of himself, and all things about " him, as a fettled Perfuation that he is Dying " daily." Nothing fo great a Spur to the Dispatch of necessary Business, as a due Estimate of the Shortness and Uncertainty of Life. What soever thine Hand findeth thee to do, faith Solomon, do it with all thy might: for there is no Work nor Counsel in the Grave whither thou art going. 6 I must work the Works of Him that fent me, faith Christ, while it is Day: the Night cometh, when no Man can work.

BE mindful of Things past, careful of Things present, and provident of Things to come. Whether we are abroad or at home, fleeping or waking, the Grave is always ready for us; it is daily fwallowing up our dearest Friends and Acquaintance; yet we attend

Decellery

b John ix. 4. . Eccl. ix. 10.

their Funerals without taking warning by their Death, to put us in mind, that we must

go to them, but they not return to us.

WE love to put the Thoughts of our latter End far from us. When we are in a firm State of Health, we have no Notion of what it is to be fick; we little confider how fuddenly a fatal Disease may surprize us, taint our Blood, corrupt our Vitals, and put a Period to our Lives. 'Tis no Security to us, that we are Young and Vigorous, fince Multitudes are daily fnatch'd away in the Strength and Flower of their Age: Whence St. James gives this sharp Reproof to the Atheistical Confidence of Worldly Men in his Time: "Go to now, ye that Say, To Day or to Morrow we will go into such 4 City, and continue there a Year, and buy and fell. and get Gain: whereas ye know not what [ball be on the Morrow.

IT should be a farther Incitement to us, to be very strict and sincere in every Duty, b In that we are always in His Sight, to whose Eyes all things are naked and open: who looks down from Heaven upon all the Sons of Men, and considereth all their Works; nay, their very Words and Thoughts, as David's Confession declares: d There is not a Word in my Tongue, but thou, Lord, knowest it altogether. Thou understandest my Thoughts afar off. In short, nothing whether near or far off, past, present, or to come,

Fames iv. 13, 14. b Heb. iv. 13. Pfalm xxxiii.

necessary or contingent, great or small, but it lies fully open to one fingle View of the Divine Omniscience. God is always present with us. and his Eye is upon us, where-ever we are, or whatever we are doing. O that we were fo happy, as with holy David, To let the Lord always before us. What Temptation of Pleafure or Advantage could prevail with that Man to commit a Trespass, who knows that he cannot do it, but in the Presence and Sight of his Judge, who hath strictly forbidden it. and will eternally damn him for it? On the other Hand, What Difficulties or Dangers can tleter a Man from his Duty, who lives under the Influence of this Faith? For what can more animate a brave Soldier, than to fight in the Sight of his Prince or General, who will be fure to take Notice of those that distinguish themselves, and reward them with particular Marks of his Favour? How then must the Soldier of Christ acquit himself in his Combats with the Corruptions of his Flesh, and the Malice of wicked Men and Devils! How will he be excited to fight the good Fight of Paith by this Confideration, That the Captain of his Salvation stands by him, not only to fee how he behaves himself, but to strengthen and support him with Power to overcome, and then to Crown him with Eternal Life!

CONSIDER moreover, the great Ease and Peace which will redound to us, from a fincere and thorough Compliance with the N 3

Laws of our Religion. That which of all Things, next to the Guilt of Sin, makes Mens Lives uneasie and troublesome, is their too eager Concern and Sollicitude for the obtaining or securing the Things of this World. But furely our Reliance on God, if any thing, would cure this reftless Sollicitude, and make us, as the Apostle advises, to live without Carefulness. By which I don't mean, that it would or should make a Man neglect the Duties of his particular Calling, or those honest Methods which God allows him to use for the obtaining, not only the Necessaries, but Conveniencies and Comforts of Life. But his Faith will teach him, after having used his own hearty Endeavours for those Purposes, not to disquiet himself about the Success of them, but to refer the Issue intirely to God, and acquiesce in it, as knowing that he perfectly understands his Circumstances, and is better able to chuse for him, than he is for

himself, well has roll holow to sollely and WHAT abundance of Fears and Anxieties dotb he discharge himself of, that can cast himself and all his Cares upon the Almighty, who he knows is always with him, and cares for him? He is not discomposed with melancholy Thoughts and uneasie Apprehensions. He walks before God in great Security all Day, and rests under the Shadow of his Wings at Night, being affured that God who is about his Bed, makes him dwell in Safety. In Time of Adversity, how comfortably may a Man

Man reflect, That all his Wants and Troubles are feen and known of him, who is able to supply them, and willing too, if he sees it best for him? That how bitter soever his Cup may be, it is of his Heavenly Father's mixing. who never afflicts his Children willingly, but always for their Good: who perfectly understands their Weakness, and the Strength of the Potion; and will either so abate this, or supply the other by the Power of his Grace, that it shall work for their Good; the Affliction, though for the present it may not seem joyous, but grievous, shall afterward yield the peace-

able Fruit of Righteousness.

AT all Times, in all Places, upon all Occasions, he hath free Access to God, represents his Infirmities, his Wants, his Pressures to him; and by a faithful Application of the Divine Promifes to himself (in which he doth as affuredly believe God speaks to him, as if an Angel from Heaven brought him the Message) he comforts and supports himself under, or rather Is he perexults and triumphs over them. plex'd with Difficulties, out of which he knows not how to extricate himself; at a Loss which way to turn, or what to do? He applies to himself that encouraging Word of the Psalmist, Commit thy Way to the Lord, and he shall bring it to pass. Is he under a Temptation that feems too powerful for him? He lays hold of God's favourable Declaration to St. Paul, in a

^{*} Pfalm xxxvii. 5.

like Extremity; My Grace is sufficient for thee; for my Strength is made perfect in Weakness. Is he surrounded with Dangers which threaten every thing that he values and loves, even Life it self? He consirms himself with that Promise which God made to his Church of old, by the Prophet Isaiah, Fear not, thou Worm Jacob, for I am with thee: be not dismay'd, I will strengthen thee; I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the Right Hand of my Righteousness. When thou passest through the Waters, I will be with thee, and throthe Rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the Fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the Flame kindle upon thee.

The frightful Suggestions of Satan may possibly disturb, and the Mistakes of a timorous Mind, wrought up by an unhappy Complexion, may sometimes deject even a very good Man. But so long as he conscientiously avoids all presumptuous Sins, and penitently bewails all his Infirmities, he may justly expossuate with his tumultuous Thoughts in the Language of Holy David: d Why art thou cast down, O my Soul, and why art thou so disquieted within me? Still put thy trust in God; for I will yet praise him, who is the Health of my Countenance, and my God. In God's Word will I rejoyce; in the Lord's Word will I comfort me; yea, in God have I put my trust, I will not be afraid what Man can do unto me. I will sing of thy Power, O Lord,

² Cor. xii. 9. b Isaiab xli. c Isaiab xliii. d Psal. xliii. 5.

and praise thy Mercy betimes in the Morning; for thou hast been my Defence and Refuge in the Day of my Trouble. He will with infinite Satisfaction hear St. Paul making a general Challenge to all the Powers on this side Heaven, to hurt the sincere Christian: Who shall lay any thing to the Charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, year rather that is risen again, who is even at the right Hand of God, who also maketh Intercession

for us.

MAY He grant us All the Grace, timely to consider the great Importance of Serving him a few Days, in the Practice of those Duties to God, our Neighbour, and our Selves, which are here faithfully, tho' concisely reprefented, that so we may attain those everlasting Crowns of Glory, which he hath purchased for us! The amiable Qualifications of which important Duties are: An Integrity that cannot be corrupted: A Resolution in Goodness that cannot be baffled by Temptations: A Superiority of Soul, that is above the Allurements of the World: An Evennels of Temper, which Injuries cannot eafily discompose: A Principle and Habit of doing Good, which no Ingratitude or Unworthiness of the Object can weaken: A Conversation with God and heavenly Things, which makes the Soul both great and humble; which extinguishes in it all Envy at the Prosperity of others, but

^{*} Rom. viii. 33,34.

enlarges its Tendernels and Compassion for the Milerable: A mild Generolity of Temper ever ready to do Good, but with Prudence and Discretion, and in the sweetest and most obliging Manner. These are such Embellishments and Ornaments as will not fail to win the Admiration, Love and Praise of all the fensible and observing part of Mankind.

TO persuade our selves that we are grown to a Maturity and perfect Stature in Christ, when we have had but some few transient Thoughts about Religion, which have never funk deep into our Hearts; to esteem our Righteousnels a just Qualification for the Kingdom of Heaven, when it is not only inferior to that of the Scribes and Pharifees, but far short of the very Pagans; this hath no Foundation in Scripture, and is entirely a new Go-No; every Christian must be filled with the Holy Ghost, that is, with his Heavenly Inspiration, influencing and cherishing pure Defires, like the hallowed Fire of the Altar, which tho' buried fometimes in Ashes, vot upon a little friring, glows and spackles again. No body supposes that Heaven should always actually fill our Minds; It must in some Measure give way to the World, in admitting those necessary Refreshments which craving Nature exacts of us; and without which it cannot long fublist.

IF our Minds be much affected with the Contemplation of Heavenly Things; if we are earnest to know what we shall do to be faved;

CHAP. II. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 1

if we love to imploy our Time and Pains in Religious Duties, and feel a divine Warmth in our Souls when we are at our Devotions, and enjoy our felves most when we approach God in his Ordinances; then have we comfortable Assurance, that the Spiritual and Eternal Life is actually begun in us.

LET not th' insidious God of Sleep surprize, Nor steal in Slumbers on thy weary Eyes, Till every Action of the former Day, Strictly thou dost, and rigorously, survey. With Rea'rence at thy own Tribunal stand, And answer truly to thy own Demand : Where have I been? In what have I transgress'd? What Good or Ill bath this Day's Life express d? Where have I fail'd in what I ought to do? To God, to Man, or to my Self what's due? Nicely enquire what things from first to last, From Morning-Light to Evening-Stars have paft. If evil were thy Deeds, repenting mourn, And let thy Soul with strong Remorfe be torn. If good, the Good with Peace of Mind repay, And to thy felf retir'd, with Pleasure say; Rejoyce, my Soul! thou hast well spent this Day.) move.

These Thoughts, and chiefly these, thy Mind should Employ thy Study, and engage thy Love.

These are the Rules which will to Virtue lead,
And teach thy Feet the Heavenly Paths to tread.



ei oil Isaac HAP. HI.

H.T. 4 O' Sheet for Misses

LOVE of GOD.

HE Love of GOD is the Fundamental Principle and Source of all RELIGION; it branches out into all the Duties which we owe to our Relations and all the World.

Nay, we cannot Love our Selves, fo as to purfue our own real Benefit and Advantage, except we first Love Go D. This Love therefore is in the Gospel most justly styled the Great Commandment. It is the Seed of all those good Fruits, which the Holy Spirit produceth in us. The Efficacy and Influence of it is most universal; the Circuit of it most comprehenfive, virtually containing in it all other Laws and Duties of Piety. St. Paul affirms of a Mower Degree of Love, that of our Neighbour, that it is the fulfilling of the whole second Table; what ever human Duty there is, it is briefly fumm'd up in this, Thou halt love thy Neighbour

Neighbour as thy self. With stronger Reason yet must we conclude all the Duties of Piety to be comprised in the Love of God, this being the first and greatest of those two Hinges upon which (as our Lord expresses it) hang all the

Law and the Prophets,

AS this Love is most capacious in its Extent, so is it most high and noble for the Dignity of its Object. It terminates in the most excellent of all Beings; it is exercised in the most pure and heavenly Acts; its Seat is the most refined Part of the Rational Soul; and it imparts Virtue and Worth to all other Acts of Duty. For no Sacrifice is acceptable to God, which is not kindled by this Celestial Fire; no Offering sweet and pure, which is not seafoned with this Holy Salt. Nothing we do, is truly religious or virtuous, which proceeds not from a Design, or at least from an habitual Desire and Aim to please God.

HE who hath commanded us to Love Him with all our Heart, and Soul, and Strength, and Mind, cannot be pleased with us, when we act upon a different Principle, either as Men-Pleasers, or chiefly regarding our own carnal Advantages and Satisfactions. How can we be the Servants of God, when we do our own Will, and dispose of our selves as we see sit, without Respect to his Glory? Love is so powerful an Attractive, that wherever it is real, it prevails against all other Motives of Hope or Fear, Honour or Dishonour, in Favour of the Person or Thing which

commands

commands it. One needs not any Force or violent Means to constrain him to do that which he loves; but whatever Hardships or Dangers are in the Way; he willingly encounters them, and chearfully endures them for the Sake of the beloved Object; the Excellency of which is imprinted upon his Soul in fuch lively Characters, that his Thoughts are continually turn'd upon it, the whole Stream of his Affection runs towards it, and bears down all

Opposition to arrive at it.

TO the end then that our Souls may be filled with a due Measure of Divine Love, we must study to inform our Understandings with just and worthy Notions of God; always having a reverential Awe and Eiteem of him. apprehending him especially as our infinitely merciful Father, in whom we live and move and have our Being; the fole Author and Fountain of all the Blessings we either have at present, or can ever hope to enjoy; in whose Favour we can want no manner of thing that is good; but without whom our Portion is nothing but extream Woe and Misery. It is he who with unwearied Vigilance protects us from ghoftly and bodily Evils, and with an inexhaustible Stock supplies all our Wants, mer-cifully supporting us with the Comforts of this Life, but much more graciously conducting us to the everlasting Joys of his Heavenly King-dom, where we shall be made unspeakably happy by his glorious Presence, and the Pleafures and Bleffings of his right Hand; where there CHAP. UI. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 182 there is no Shadow of Death, or Sense of Pain, or any thing that can create the least

Such Views of the Divine Goodness, frequently renew'd and attended with a lively Faith, must gradually warm our Hearts, 'till we become inflamed with the Love of the Almighty Author of all Good. We cannot thus acquaint our felves with God, but we must necessarily love him with that intire and ardent Affection which he exacts of us. For shall these faint Resemblances of Good, these Glimmerings of Light and Happiness here below, fo powerfully attract our Eyes, and raise our Admiration; and shall not that boundless Ocean, of which these are but small Emanations, overwhelm us with Wonder, and excite in us a Longing and Thirst to approach him? Let us but meditate on God, 'till we are heartily perswaded with the Pialmist, That there is none comparable to him, in Heaven or in Earth, and then we shall think it no Extravagance to break out in the same Rapture: Whom have I in Heaven but thee? and there is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee.

THESE ferious Regards are the Foundation upon which the Love of God is built, the Beginning of that true Wildom which takes off the Heart of Man from the World, and unites it to its proper and only sufficient Object. Hence we may observe, that those devout

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Persons have most eminently excell'd in the Love of God, whose Minds have been most accustom'd to meditate on the Divine Excellencies, and the gracious Dispensations of Providence; their thankful Hearts have supplied their Tongues with continual Praises and Adorations of him who Dwelleth on High, and yet humbleth himself to behold the Things that are in Heaven and Earth. They have given the World a true Image and Character of the Divine Majesty; so infinite in Wisdom, so All-sufficient in Power, so perfectly Just and Holy; but above all, so abounding in Mercies and Loving-kindness, that if all the wifest Men upon Earth should meet together, and confider what Supream Lord they would chuse, who should be most beneficial to them; they could not wish or invent any thing more for the Welfare and Comfort of Mankind, than what is to be found in the most perfect Nature of Gop.

WHAT State and Distance do Earthly Sovereigns for the most part keep? How hard is it for the lower Rank of their Subjects to be admitted into their Presence, and lay any Petition before them? But the Great King of all the Earth, allows the meanest Man free Access to him at all times; nay, a kind of intimate Converse and familiar Communion: being no Respecter of Persons for their outward Condition; he is equally regardful of all that call upon him: or if he hath a more fpecial Favour to any, it is to those who are in

CHAP. III. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 184

the most afflicted and abject State, most destitute of Worldly Friends and Comforts: To these he hath given very particular Assurances of Relief in their Distress, Protection in Danger, and a Recompence for all their Losses and Sufferings. He recommends them with great Earnestness, to the rich and powerful Men of the World. He makes their Case his own, and reckons the Aids administer'd to them, as given to himself. How infinitely more gracious is this Condescension, than what is ge-

nerally feen among Men!

FARTHER; Our Earthly Patrons and Benefactors are limited in their Power and Abihities to do us good. They may be tired with our frequent Applications, and disobliged by restless Importunities; so that we must use their Benevolence cautiously, and their Fayour sparingly, for fear of quite losing it. But the Great Preserver of Men fainteth not, nor is ever weary of doing good. He invites us to make all our Requests to him; to cast all our Cares upon him; and is then most pleased with us, when we are most assiduous and importunate in our Addresses; when, like Jacob, we wrestle with him, and will not let him go, till he hath given us a Bleffing; or like the Syrophenician Woman in the Gospel, who follicited our Lord for the Cure of her Daughter, and would not be repulled by any Delay or harsh Answer, 'till Christ dismis'd her with this Applause: O Woman, great is thy Faith! Be it unto thee even as thou wilt.

HOM

HOW far then should we be from a cold. Indifferency, and idle, wandering Thoughts, in our Communion with God? as if it were a Task and a Drudgery to us to serve him. Which Disposition is a sure Demonstration to us, that we do not love him as we ought. For where true Love is, nothing feems painful and grievous. Like Fire (to which it is commonly resembled) it warms the Breast, agitates the Spirits, quickens all the Powers of the Soul, and vigoroully moves them towards the beloved Object. And we may as well imagine that Fire will not take hold on combustible Matter, as that Love will not actuate the Faculties of the Soul and Body, in order to fulfill its Desires. The Holy Plal-mist, who had most exalted Notions of the Divine Goodness, expresses the Efficacy of this Love, by fuch Defires as cannot be conceal'd: As the Hart panteth after the Water-brooks, fo panteth my Soul after thee, O God! My Soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: When shall I come and appear before God? When he was forced to abscond in the Wilderness of Judah, for fear of Saul, he represents it as his greatest Affliction, that he could not appear in the Church, and publick Worship of God. God, thou art my God! early will I feek thee: My Soul thirsteth for thee, my Flesh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirsty Land, where no Water is : to see thy Power and thy Glory, so as I have seen thee

WOH

² Pfalm xlii, b Pfalm Ixiii,

in the Sanctuary. Because thy Loving-kindness is better than Life, my Lips shall praise thee. Thus will I bles thee while I live : I will lift up my Hands in thy Name. My Soul shall be satisfied as with Marrow and Fatness; and my Mouth shall praise thee with joyful Lips: when I remember thee upon my Bed, and meditate on thee in the Nightwatches are the Work about us are the Works was

Besi pes this inward Warmth of Affection. itis an allow'd Proof of our Love of God, if we keep his Commandments. * He that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them, faith Christ, he it is that loveth me. So that if we are confcious to our felves that we wilfully offend in any Particular, or neglect any Branch of our known Duty, or do but superficially and carelessly perform it, the Love of God is so far from being perfected in us, that we have not the least true Degree of it. And therefore we must earnestly befeech Almighty God, so to inspire our Hearts with his Grace, that we may have an equal Respect to all his Commandments, and not only do those Things which he requires, with the Faculties of our Bodies, but likewise with the Desires of our Souls; and find Pleafure in the doing of them. day the Son of Min, who amid

THE Motives which are proper to excite this Love, and kindle this Flame in our Hearts, are innumerable: and tho' intimated in some

origin tive Platon ville.

² John xiv. 21.

measure already, yet well deserve to be sum'd

up together, and fet in one View.

LET us be continually posses'd with Thoughts of our intire Dependence on God: That he is the Author and Dispenser of all our good Things: His Air we breathe, his Ground we tread on, his Food fuftains us. The Bodies we carry about us are the Work of his Hands, the Soul and Spirit which informs them, is the Breath of his Mouth. He hath Created great Variety of Things for our Ufe and Pleasure; a spacious, beautiful and stately Heaven to shine upon us with its bright Luminaries; he hath filled the Earth, Air, and Waters with fuch Creatures as fupply all our Bodily Wants and Necessities. Holy David is often in Raptures at the Contemplation of this rich Furniture and curious Fabrick of the Almighty Architect. How manifold are thy Works, O Lord! in Wisdom hast thou made them all! The Earth is full of thy Riches: so is the wide Sea also, wherein Things creeping are innumerable, both small and great. b When I consider the Heavens, the Work of thy Fingers, the Moon and the Stars which thou hast ordained; what is Man, that thou art mindful of him! and the Son of Man, that thou visitest him! Thou madest him to have Dominion over the Works of thy Hands; thou hast put all Things under his rut. All Sheep and Oxen, yea,

ennlesen .

Pfalm viii. 2 Pfalm civ.

CHAP. III. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 189

and the Beasts of the Field: the Fowl of the Air. and the Fish of the Sea, and what soever passeth thro

the Paths of the Seas.

But belides this Dominion which God has given to Man over all Earthly Creatures, he hath made him peculiarly to excell in the Dignity of his Mind, having in this respect more especially created him in his own Image, adorn'd his Soul with many Divine Graces, and put him in a Capacity of rifing above this earthly Habitation, to a glorious Inheritance

in the Kingdom of Heaven.

TO this end, he hath Reveal'd to us those Means of Salvation, which we could never have discover'd by the Light of our Natural Reason or Understanding; and for our Guides to this Happiness, he hath not only inlighten'd his Church with the Doctrine of many inspired Prophets and Teachers, but hath vouchfafed to fend us his own Son, made like unto us, that in our own Nature the Fulness of the Godhead might dwell Bodily; that through him we might receive the Adoption of Sons, and be fitted for the Society of his Family in Heaven, by the Exercise of his Holy Religion here on Earth.

AND whereas through the Perverseness of our own Wills, and the Power of Temptations which furround us, we are prone to offend our Heavenly Father, and forfeit that Happiness, which on the Condition of our Obedience, he hath fully infured to us; the fame Son of God, who by fulfilling the Divine Law, and fuffering

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fuffering in our flead, hath purchased this Happiness for us, appears now in Heaven our Mediator and Advocate, in a Body like unto us, making continual Intercession for us. Whereupon our Heavenly Father is pleafed not to take the Forfeitures we make, but to offences, and receive us again to his Favour, and the Privileges of his Children, in as ample manner, as if we had always been dutiful and obedient to him. This is a Mercy which well deserves our most fixt Regard and Admiration. Behold what manner of Love the Father hath be-Stowed upon us, that we sould be called the Sons of God! And if Sons, then Heirs; Heirs of God, and foint-Heirs with Christ. b And if we lin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous; and he is the Propitiation for our Sins.

Being in this Condition of Sons, we are not treated with Severity and Rigor. Our God imposeth on us no difficult or burthensom Task; he exacts no costly Sacrifices or tedious Observances; but is satisfied with our pious and chearful Acknowledgement of his Mercies, and our hearty Endeavours to perform those Services, which are so far from being grievous, or any ways superstuous, that our own Welfare, Comfort, and Advantage, rightly apprehended, would abundantly dispose us to do

³ John iii. b'i John ii. 1.

them: it being indeed the Essence of our Happiness, the Joy of our Soul, the Manna which shall feed us to eternal Life, to do the

Will of our Heavenly Father.

TO this most tender and compassionate Father, this great and only Benefactor of ours, . we owe the easie, just, and pleasant Duty of LOVE. If we are destitute of this Heavenly Affection, we are none of his Children. Refemblance is absolutely necessary to declare us his genuine Offspring: 2 For God is Love, and every one that is born of God, loveth God. This intitles us to the Benefits of his Family. to his Paternal Care of us, and Provision for us: b For the Lord preserveth all those that love him: that is, he fuffers nothing to hurt them, but causeth all things, how cross and difficult foever they may appear, to work together for their good. So that if we do not love God, we are not only monstrously ungrateful and wicked, but imprudent, even to a Degree of Infatuation: because being alienated from the Love of God, we are at the same time excluded from his Presence and Favour, and confequently from all Safety, Joy and Comfort: We are exposed to all the dreadful Effects of Divine Wrath, to the Misfortunes of the World, and the Anguish of an evil Conscience: We are abandon'd to the Malice of Devils, and confign'd to their unpeaceable, accurfed Society for ever.

John iv. Ifalm cxlv. 20.

IF our Love of God be fincere, it will be fo constant as to hold out under all Circumstances and Conditions of Life. It is built upon fuch Motives as are of perpetual Duration; and therefore is not alterable by any Variety of Fortune. If God vouchfafes us the Light of his Countenance, and appoints our Mansions in the Sun-shine of Prosperity, we ought humbly to rejoyce, and thankfully look up to the Hand which dispenses these Blessings. But when on the contrary, he hides his Face from us, and suffers our Sun to be overcast with the Clouds of Advertity, we know that these are not the Strokes of his heavy Displeafure, but Corrections which proceed from his merciful Care of us : * For whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth; and scourgeth every Son whom he receiveth. In restraining our Desires, and proceeding in a Way different from what we had proposed, he acts the Part of a wife Master of a Family, who will not indulge his Children in their Cravings, when he knows it would be to their Hurt; and can rather bear their Crying sometimes, than have them spoil'd and ruin'd with always having their own Will and Way. It was the Saying of a Learned Divine, one who every way merited that Character, when he faw any of his Acquaintance perplex'd about the Management of their difficult Affairs ; When will you begin to truft God, and permit him to govern the World?

Heb. Xii. 5. Dr. Hammond.

CHAP. III. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 193

EVEN a mere Heathen Writer could see, what a Christian hath much more Reason to be sensible of; That we may more sately trust. God than our own Prudence, and that he loves us better than we do our selves.

Permittes ipfis expendere numinibus, quid Conveniat nobis, rebusque sit utile nostris, Nam pro jucundis aptissima queque dabunt Dî. Carior est illis homo, quam sibi.

Intrust thy Fortunes to the Powers Above.

Leave them to manage for thee, and to grant
What their unerring Wisdom sees thee want.

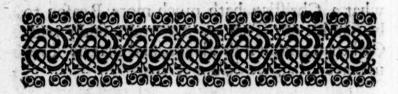
In Goodness, as in Greatness, they excell:
Alt! that we lov'd our selves but half so well!

Juvenal. Sat. X.



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Divine PRAISES

nage for thee and to grant

THANKSGIVINGS.



HE Soul which is truly disposed to Admire and PRAISE its great CREATOR, can never want Matter for the Subject of grateful Sentiments. Our Daily Restora-

tion to Life and Action, by the Renewed Light of every Morning; the Preservation of our Health and Limbs from the Perils to which we are exposed every Moment; the plentiful Provision which God is pleased to make for us, by granting us feafonable Returns of Summer and Winter, Seed-Time and Harvest, and causing the Clouds to drop Fatness upon the the Womb of the Earth; the gracious Methods of Providence in recruiting our exhauft-'ed Stores, and affording us the Means of daily SubCHAP. IV. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 195

Subsistence; the Opportunities we have of exercising the great Duties of Religion, and growing in Grace and Virtue, are all Blessings which like the Streams of a River are continually flowing in upon us; tho' we had the same many Years since, yet they hold on their Course; the Springs are everlasting, and fail not.

IF we add our past Receipts to what we are incessantly taking in, how surprizingly great will the whole Sum appear? The Royal Prophet David hath fet us this Pattern of comprehensive Gratitude: He treasur'd up the Divine Benefits in faithful Memory; he was always recollecting and reviewing them in his Thoughts, and reprefenting them in the most advantageous Light, according to their just Dimensions and endearing Circumstances. I will remember the Works of the Lord, and call to mind thy Wonders of old Time. I will think alfo of all thy Works, and my Talking shall be of thy Doings. b Have I not remember'd thee on my Bed, and thought on thee when I was waking? Because thou hast been my Helper, therefore under the Shadow of thy Wings will I rejoyce. I will give Thanks unto thee among the People: I will sing Praises to thee among the Nations. c For thy Mercy is greater than the Heavens, and thy Truth reacheth unto the Clouds. d Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with his Benefits.

Pfal. lxxvii. Pfal. lxiii. Pfal. cviii. d Pfal. lxviii.

IT is not enough to have our Hearts touch'd with a Sense of God's Goodness: they must be enflam'd and ravish'd with the Contemplation of it; they must entertain it with the same Satisfaction, as a thirsty Traveller drinks down the fresh and cooling Streams. Gratitude is of a fruitful and diffusive Nature; it will not be smother'd under fullen Looks and a filent Tongue. It will not content it felf in lonesome Soliloquies, and fecret Whispers of the Divine Praises; but loudly eccho them forth, and animate others to joyn in the melodious Harmony. The fweet Singer of Ifrael is all Exstalle and Rapture, when he tunes his Harp to celebrate the Praises of the Most High. He invokes Heaven and Earth. the Celestial Quire of Angels, the several Estates and Generations of Men, the innumerable Company of all the Creatures, to affift and joyn in Confort with him, in magnifying the glorious Name, and recounting the noble Acts of the Great Author and Fountain of all Bleffings and Comforts.

eafy and reasonable is this Homage, to avow our Dependence upon, and Obligations to him! to publish to the World our manifold Receipts of his undeferved Favours! 2 To fing of the Mercies of the Lord for ever, and make known his Faithfulness to all Generations! If he had bid us do fome great thing in return for his inestimable Kindness, have

Pfal. lxxxix.

CHAP. IV. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 197

Oyl, and clouded the Skies with whole Burntofferings; thould we not have done all this?
How much more when he requires only the
cheap Tribute of the Heart and Tongue, and
fuch other Acts of grateful Love as we are al-

ways in a Capacity to render him?

THE Heather World spared for no costly Sacrifices and well composed Hymns to honour. their Imaginary Deities, and let forth the famous Atchievements of their Heroes; those to whom, in their Opinion, they owed the Fruits of the Earth, the Comforts of Life, and the Defence and Safeguard of their Countrey. They were indeed mistaken in the Object. but not in the Substance of the Duty; paying a Debt that was really due, but not to fuch Creditors. I wish these Men, however superstitious in other Things, do not rise up in Judgment with the Men of this Generation. and condemn them, who knowing the true God, honour him not as God; who receiving the highest Instances of his Goodness, don't teflify a just Esteem of it; and consequently neglect the most Effential and Noble Part of all Religion, and render themselves unworthy of further Mercies, by their vile Abufe of what they have already received a one a day, tach aw

THERE is no Incident of Life, but what yields us sufficient Occasion to bless God; how much then shall we be in Arrear of Duty, if we commonly neglect to do it? But yet if God should bestow no more Bles-

fings

fings upon Men, than what they are truly thankful for, it is to be fear'd that many who now have Abundance, would quickly come to want, and the Fields which bring forth a Hundred fold, would produce Thiftles inflead of Wheat, and Cockle inflead of Barley, to rious

AS Solomon fends the Sluggard to the Ant to learn Industry and good Husbandry; fo God justly upbraids his unthankful People with the Example of the Ox and Afs, who acknowledge their Owners and their Stalls. The dumb Creatures about our Houses shew us a manifest Sense of Gratitude for the Maintenance and Protection we afford them. So that not only the Pagans, but the very Brutes may shame unthankful Christians into Gratitude

HAVING Shewn the Necessity and Reasonableness of Thanksgiving, we may next consider how often it ought to be perform'd; concerning which St. Paul's Rule is, That we bould give Thanks to God always, for all Things; which Word, always, imports, not an incessant speaking forth his Praise, but a ready Dispofition, an habitual Inclination to it; fuch as Men have to their daily Affairs; in which, tho there are frequent Respites and Intermissions, yet the Defign is continually profecuted. As we fay, fuch a one is writing a Book, or building a House, or making a Journey, tho? at that prefent he may be Sleeping, or Eating, or doing fomething else; but his Design sleeps not, his Purpose is not interrupted. And thus Wester blood bestow

CHAP. IV. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 199 we are to understand our Lord and his Apofiles, when they exhort us to continue instant in Prayer and Thanksgiving; our Hearts must always he fixed and prepared to these Duties; like a well tuned Instrument, tho' not actually play'd on, yet always ready for the Heavenly Anthem, It is not the Act but the Habit that denominates a Man in any kind of Grace or Virtue. . The righteous Man, faith David, is ever merciful, and lendeth. Not that his Hand is always distributing, but his Heart is always inclinable to do it when need requires, Even fo a grateful Man doth always give Thanks, by being disposed upon all Opportunities actually to express his Thankfulness.

IN order to acquire this good Disposition, we must in the first Place, endeavour to maintain a constant Calmness and Evenness of Temper. We can hardly conceive what Thankfulness is, without including Pleasure and Satisfaction in the Notion of it: Our Minds must be bright and serene, that we may with a pure Flame offer this Sacrifice. And therefore they who are often drunk with intemperate Rage and Passion, must needs lose many Opportunities of giving God the Glory, and receiving in themselves the Comforts of his Mercies.

NO Time can be unfeasonable for the Praises of God. When in our Walks we survey this ample Theatre of the World, contemplat-

Plah xxxvii, 26.

ing the stately Beauty and Order of all its Parts, then should our Hearts be affected with a Sense of Gratitude, and our Lips break forth into devout Praile, with the holy Pfalmift: 'The Heavens declare thy Glory, and the Firmament fleweth thy Handy-work. b The Eyes of all watt upon thee, and thou givest them their Meat in due Seafon. Thou openest thine Hand, and satisfiest the Defire of every living Thing. Onto thee lift I up mine Eyes, O thou that dwellest in the Heavens. d Accept, I befeech thee, the free-will Offerings of my Mouth, O LORD: and teach me thy Judyments. From every Object of Sense, from every Event of Providence, we may extract fit Matter of Thankfgiving. If our Returns were as frequent as our Receipts, they must be made every Moment. However, there are some special Seasons, which do more loudly demand them. When any new remarkable Boon is conferr'd upon us; when our gracious God prevents us with his Bleffings; when we are deliver'd from Straights in our Apprehension inextricable, escape Dangers very impending, and to human Views mevitable. In fuch Circumstances as these we have a most proper Theme of elevated Praise to the Father of Mercies, and God of Help and Comfort in Time of need.

^{*} Pfal. xix. Pfal. cxlv. 15, 16. Pfal. cxxiii. 1. Pfal, cxix, 108.

WHEN we collect together in our Minds. (as we should often) the merciful Dealings of God with us thro' the Course of our Lives: How strangely we have found Friends and Relief in extream Diffres; how well we have escaped the Hands of Robbers in our Travels, or the Infection of Diseases in a general Sickness, or Fire in some common Conflagration; how much we are, by the Bleffing of God upon our Employments, rais'd above Want in our way of Living; But above all, How graciously the good Hand of God hath conducted us in the Paths of Piety and Virtue, fo as to preferve us from many grievous Sins, into which we were fometime in Danger of falling. Upon fuch Remembrances as these, we should kindle our Sparks of Thankfulness into a Flame, and look up to our Mighty Deliverer and Benefactor with most humble Adoration and Gratitude.

No T that we are to confine our Thanksgiveings only to great and signal Mercies. Those of daily and ordinary Use are to be put into our Recognitions. Indeed we should not esteem any of God's Blessings small, if we well consider'd what it is to want them. A Breath of sweet and wholesome Air, a Cup of restreshing Water, a sew Hours of comfortable Repose, are in common Estimation but ordinary Matters; and yet how precious is any one of these to the poor afflicted Wretch that wants it?

P

A S thus we are obliged to be Thankful for our own, to likewife for the Bleffings which befall others. The Christian Spirit requires us, not only to make Prayers, but Thankfgivings for all Men; to rejoyce with them that do rejoyce; to take Pleasure in the Prosperity of others, and heartily thank God for it. Could we but attain this lociable Part of Charity, we need not envy the Wealth and Splendor of the greatest Princes. In such a friendly Sympathy, while the Glory of all is given to God, the Satisfaction of all will redound to our felves. Our Neighbour's good Saccess is ours, if we equally triumph in it: his Riches are ours, if we delight to fee him enjoy them: his Virtue is ours, if we are better'd by it, and have hearty Complagence in it. By this means a Man derives a Confluence of all Joy upon himself, and makes himfelf, as it were, the Center of all Felicity, inriches himself with the Plenty, and satiates himself with the Pleasure of the whole World. Referving to God the Praise, he enjoys the Satisfaction of all the Good that comes to his Knowledge.

THUS St. Paul reasons from the Similitude there is between the Natural Body of Man, and the Myffical Body of Christ, the Church; that as in the former there is a Sympathy of Pleasure and Pain between all the Members; fo we who in Christ are united into one Body, and Fellow-members one with another, should

have the same quick Sense of one another's Conditions: If one Member fuffer, all the rest should be in pain for it; if one rejoyce, the Joy should be diffused through all the reft.

But to proceed: We are not only obliged to give Thanks for pleasant and prosperous Occurrences, but for those likewise which cross our Desires, and distaste our natural Sense; for Poverty, Sickness, and Disgrace; for all the Sprrows and Troubles, the Difasters and Disappointments that befall us. We ought to fay Grace to our Physick, as well as to our Food; because though unpalarable, it conduces to our Health: And for the same Reason, all Adversities, which are intended by God for the Restoration of our Soul's Health, are proper Subjects of our Praise and Thanksgiving. I will thank the Lord for giving me Warning: my Roins also chasten me in the Night-season. know, O Lord, that thy Judgments are right, and that thou in Faithfulness hast afflicted me.

WERE the Choice of our Condition wholly permitted to us, we should make a very difadvantageous Election. We should naturally embrace a rich and plentiful Estate; whenas God knows many times it would make us flothful and luxurious; it would either swell us with high Thoughts, or encumber us with anxious Cares, or expose us to dangerous Temptations, and render us forgetful of God.

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We should, no doubt, be fond of the Applause and Favour of Men; but this, God sees, would debauch our Minds, and tempt us to arrogate immoderately to our selves, and facrilegiously to rob the Almighty of his Honour. Therefore he suffers us in much Mercy to labour under the Reproaches of Malice and Envy, that we may glory only in his Favour, and pursue more earnestly the pure Delights of a good Conscience. Which wise Conduct of our Heavenly Father highly merits our utmost Thanks and Praise.

INDEED, the Advantages which may be made of Afflictions, are so many and so great, that we should not only acquiesce, but rejoyce in them; we should receive them chearfully at God's Hand, as Tokens of his Love, who like a wise Physician of our Souls, administers such Potions to us, as, though bitter, will end in Health, Strength, and Joy. We should interpret them as Arguments that we are in that straight and narrow Way which leads to everlasting Life, and that these momentary Afflictions are working for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory.

But in all our Songs of Praise, our highest and sweetest Accents must be, for the Means of Grace, and for the Hope of Glory. Herein we must exceed, as far as the Reasonable Soul doth in Dignity surpass this frail and shortliv'd Body; as far as the infinite Duration of Eternity out-measures the narrow Limits

which

CHAP. IV. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 205

which terminate this uncertain Life. We are, 'tis true, greatly indebted to God for our Creation, for calling us out of Nothing into this high and honourable Station among his Works. But how much more for calling us out of Darkness into this marvellous Light. the Knowledge of Himself and Jesus Christ whom he hath fent to redeem us! How much more for raifing up this mortal Flesh to a State of Immortality, and exchanging our Earthly for a Heavenly Habitation! We ought not to receive our Bodily Food without lifting up grateful Hearts to him who filleth all Things living with Plenteousness; much less will Ingratitude be excused for that Bread which is from Above, God's bleffed Word and Sacraments, whereby our Souls are nourished to everlasting Life. To these Spiritual Mercies, the Holy Psalmist gives the Preserence in his Method of Praise. First, He incites his Soul to glorify God for the Pardon of his Sins; and then he commemorates Temporal Mercies: Who satisfieth thy Mouth with good Things, making thee young and lusty as an Eagle.

AND now, what little need can there be of farther Incitements to the Practice of this Duty? Unless we are quite divested of that Affection, than which none is more strongly interwoven in the Original Constitution of our Souls, To be sensible of Benefits receiv'd; to love and respect those who exhibit them:

² Pfalm ciil.

to acknowledge them with fuitable Expreffions, and be ready to make competent Returns for them. Even the worst of Men, the most barbarous and favage, retain fomething of a natural Sense of Benefits conferr'd upon them. Ingratitude is fuch a deform'd and monffrous Birth, as none will own: it is deterted and abhorred of all Men. But in the Court of Heaven, and at the Tribunal of our Supream Benefactor, from whom we receive wharever we enjoy, no manner of Offender shall be more terribly arraign'd, more surely condemn'd, or more severely punished, than the

Ungrateful Man. WHAT Excuse can we find to plead for the Neglect of so reasonable a Duty; and which is withal so cheap and easie, so sweet and de-lightful? The Pleasure of it is often attested by one who was well experienced in it. is a good Thing to give Thanks unto the Lord; and to fing Praise unto thy Name, O thou Most High! To tell of thy Loving-kindness early in the Morning; and of thy Truth in the Night-season. O praise the Lord, for he is good! O sing Praises unto his Name, for it is lovely! What Thought can enter into the Heart of Man, more comfortable than this, That the most Wise and Mighty Kang of Heaven and Earth, is concern'd to do him good? That by a fecret and invitible Influence He disposes the Hearts of Men to become his Friends and Favourers;

द पानिक्र

Pfalm citi.

Of Pfalm xcii.

Men who are many times averfe enough to other good Works; who perhaps had no Relation to him, nor any Acquaintance with him; who fometime were his avow'd Enemies, and might rather have been expected to have done him ill Offices? That fuch Men should be converted into his Benefactors, and feek to do him good; this must needs transport a Person of common Sense and Piety, into Admiration and Love of that greatest and best of Governors, who hath the Hearts of all Men in his Hand, and makes them subservient to his own

O Infinitely AMIABLE when hall I love thee without Bounds, without Coldness, or Interruption! Let me never suffer any Creature to be thy Rival, or to steal my Heart from thee ! Let me have no other God, no other Lord, but thee! O let the World never more command my Affections, which I withdraw from that to fix on thee! Whatever is amiable in the Creatures, is derived from. thee, who only art perfectly Excellent. O Bleffed JESUS! who didst love me so dearly, as for my sake to endure a painful and shameful Death : how can I live without being thine ! When shall all carnal Affections die in me, and all Things belonging to the Spirit, live and grow in me? When (ball I be willing to lay down my Life for thee, who haft shed thy precious Blood for mession and about the service of

LET Riches, Honours, Pleasures, Friends, Health and Strength, and all Things fail me, I am still refolv'd, by his Grace, to rejoyce in the Lord, and to joy in the God of my Salvation! On the other Hand, Let all these Earthly Bless. ings be poured out upon me, yet am I still determin'd, that as it is my Duty, so shall it be my Delight and Comfort, to ferve my Go pi I will not be cast down or dejected at any fevere Dispensation, which the Men here below count a Loss or Affliction; but still behave my felf like a Candidate of Heaven and live above the Smiles and Frowns of this rors, who bath the Hearts of Mt blrow

MAKE me, O GOD! diligent and earnest in pleasing thee! Let me discharge the most painful and costly Duties, and forfake Friends, Riches, Ease, and Life it felf, rather than disobey thee! Thine Eyes are upon the Ways of Man, and thou feest all his Goings. Let all the Earth love and fear thee; for thou knowest and canst reward their Service. Praife the Lord, O my Soul! and all that is within me, praise his Holy Name! Praise the · Lord, O my Soul! and forget not all his Benefits! Who can express the noble Acts of the Lord: or flew forth all his Praife? Which forgiveth all thy Sins : and healeth all thine Infirmities? Which faveth thy Life from Destruction: and crowneth thee with Mercy and Loving-kindness?

Thus I have inculcated this Duty of Divine Praise and Thanksgiving, with repeated Instances and Motives, as it was necessary for me to do, because an exact Performance of it, promotes and facilitates the Practice of all other Duties; fince the more we are fenfible CHAP. IV. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 209

of our immumerable Obligations to God, the more we shall in Prudence study to please Him by a fincere Obedience, that thereby we may fecure to our felves the Continuance of his Loving-kindness and Mercy. While we are paying our Tribute for what we have receiv'd, we are disposing our Lord to new and greater Favours; we render him more propitious to us, and our felves more dutiful and loyal to For how can we at the same time him. piously acknowledge our Dependance on him, and yet venture to alienate him from us by any wilful Violation of his facred Laws? The Memory of past, and Regard of present Mercies, will confirm our Faith, augment our Love, and improve our Obedience for the Time to come.

LET us then glorify God both in our Bodies and in our Souls, which are his. Let us honour Him with our Subfance, and with the First-fruits of all our Increase. Seeing all that we are, and all we receive, is from his free Bounty, O therefore let us employ all to his Glory; our Parts, our Estates, our Health, our Time, even all the Powers of our Souls and Bodies. Let us Daily exercise our selves in that Praise which is the supream Joy of Paradise, the Perfection of Angelical Bliss: That so at the End of our Days, we may be found such good Proficients as shall be adjudged worthy to be

Frov. iii. 9.

.VOID The HSW M of the O . PART II 210 added to the Heavenly Choir, who continually incompass the Throne of the Most High, and profrate themselves before him secure to our felves the Continuance gailes Loving-kindnels and Mercy. While we are Bleffing, and Glory, and Wisdom, and Thanks-1915 goving, and Honour, and Power, and Might. of ribe unto our GOD for Even and Ever 11 us, and our felves more dutiful and loval to am, For how can we at the lame time pioutly acknowledge our Detention bush him. and yet venture to allenate him from us by any wilful Violation of his facted Laws? The Memory of pall; and Regard of prefent Mercies, will confirm one Baich, augment our Love, and improve our Obedience for the Ther ins to his Glouv i our O therefore let us Parts, our Estares, our Hoalth, our Time, ever all the Powers of our Souls and Bodies, "Line ns Daily exercise our selves in that Prasse which is the tupream lov of Paradile, the Perfaction of Angelical Blifs ! That fo at the End The END of the Second Part.

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Christian's Companion:

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OF THE

Christian Religion.

PART III.

Containing Our

DUTY

TO

Our SELVES.

LOVE not the WORLD, neither the Things that are in the World. If any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the World, the Lust of the Flesh, and the Lust of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life, is not of the Father, but is of the World. And the World passeth away, and the Lust thereof: But he that doeth the Will of God, abideth for Ever, I John ii. 15, 16, 17.

LONDON:

Printed for J. HOOKE. MDCCXVI.

The transfer of Hold To OR, Christian Reuteron. PART Containing Our SELV Love not the World wither the Things that are in the World. It any iden tone the World, the Look of the Father is not in him. For all that it in the World; the Last of the Floss, and the Last of the Tixes and the Pride of Life, is not of the Further, but is of the World . And the World oxifieth away and the took thereof: But be chardeed the Will of God, abideth for Even, i John il. 18, 16, 17. LOWDON: MDCCKVL Printed for J. Hoone.



OFOUR

The Soul confirs in the good Government of

Our SELVES.

PART III.



T is an Observation which some have made concerning the Moral Law, That it teaches us our Duty to GOD and our Neighbour, but says nothing of any Concern

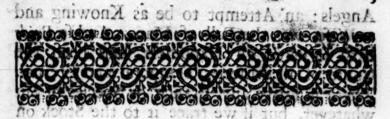
or Regard we are to have for Our Selves. To this it may be answerd. That we then derive the greatest Blessings upon Our Selves, when we are most observant of our Duties to God and our Neighbour; for then are we most secure of that Love and Protection which alone

The SUM of the PART III.

alone can make us Happy. However, there are in Holy Scripture feveral Precepts of Honefly and Virtue, which are more-especially intended for the Welfare of our own Souls and Bo dies, and which may all be comprehended under that general Head of Sobriety, laid down by St. Paul, 2 in Contra-distinction to that Piety which is owing to God, and that Righteoufness and Charity we are to discharge towards al Men. I shall endeavour to represent this Duty in the feveral Branches of it, as it refpects both Soul and Body : The Welfare of the Soul confifts in the good Government of its Affections and Paffions; In order to which the Exercise of many Virtues is required. I shall begin with HUMILITY, as that which may juffly claim the Precedence of all the rest, as being the Foundation whereon they must all be built; and without which the Candidate of Virtue will prove like that foolish Man our Lord speaks of, b who built his House upon the Sand.

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HUMILITY.

The HUMILITY I here proposed to speak of, is the Rule of that Esteem and Opinion we ought to have of Our Selves: It keeps us from over-valuing any

Thing within or without us, and from being too much disturbed at any Slights or Contempts which other Men may cast upon us. The Two Extreams opposed to this Virtue, are Pride on the one hand, and Pusillanimity, or too abject a Spirit, on the other.

PRIDE is briefly and pertinently defined by St. Paul, A thinking of one's self more highly than he ought to think; which false Valuation renders Men very presumptuous, and prone to break through the Laws of God and Man for the compassing of their ambitious Ends. This Sin of Pride is the Parent of all Mischief in Heaven and Earth. An Ambition to be as great as the Most High, was the Ruin of Angels:

Angels: an Attempt to be as Knowing and as Wife, was the Fall of Man. And so Pride hath forfeited all Happiness, and been the Cause of all Miseries Temporal and Eternal. There is scarce any Branch or Species of Sin whatever, but if we trace it to the Stock on which it grows, we shall commonly find Pride at the Bottom of it. I might instance in a multitude of Particulars, which owe their

Birth to this fertile Parent.

FIRST, All Diffatisfaction with our Condition; all Murmurings and Repinings at God's Disposal of us, derive themselves in a direct Line from their Mother Pride. St. Jude expresses the Sin of the proud Angels thus; They kept not their first Estate. They were not pleased with that Station wherein God had Created them, but moved above their proper Spheres, and so confounded that Sacred Order, which the Divine Wisdom had established in Heaven. For the fame Reason Men become Rebels in the State, and Hereticks in the Church, because they are conceited of their own Abilities and Merits, and think they ought to have the Precedence of all others. Like the old Pharifees among the Jews, they think very highly of themselves, and despise others. They have an extravagant Opinion of their own Understanding, an immoderate Conceit of their own happy Genius; but a very low Efteem of other Mens Performances and

Jude v. 6.

Management of Affairs. Thus Ambitious Abfalom, ripe for Rebellion, pities the Ill Conduct of his Father David, and wishes, and that I were made Judge in the Land, that every Man which hath any Suit, or Cause, might come unto me, and I would do him Justice. Thus the false Apostles and deceitful Workers who opposed St. Paul, represented him to the People as a poor, weak, ungifted Brother, and pretended, that they were much his Superiors in Eloquence and b Learning, and preached the Gospel more freely and spiritually than he did,

SECONDLY, Other Sins have a Relation, tho' a more remote one, to this of Pride; as Anger, which by the wife Solomon is denominated proud Wrath. A peevish, angry Man is very apt to think himself ill used, and interprets every little Neglect or Mistake of those about him, as an Affront put upon him. So likewise Backbiting and Slandering, tho' it be the immediate Effect of Envy, yet it flows originally from Pride, which makes Men esteem themselves the only Persons who deserve to shine and be applauded, and consequently are apt to sully the Character of those by whom they apprehend themselves to be lessen'd and obscur'd.

² Sam. Xv. 2 Cor. Xi. Prov. XXi. 24.

THESE, and many more pernicious Fruits. fpring from that bitter Root of Pride; whence it is justly detested of God; a Every one that is proud in Heart, is an Abomination to the Lord: And threatned with unavoidable Vengeance; Tho' Hand joyn in Hand, he shall not be unpunished: And this was executed in a very remarkable Manner upon the Proud and Haughty King Nebuchadnezzar, who was driven from the midst of all his Glory, b to dwell and feed with the Beafts.

OF this Pride there are feveral Sorts; one is Vain-glory, or an excessive Thirst after the Praise of Men. Which is so devouring a Sin, that in any good Duty or Christian Action, it destroys the Virtue of it, rendring it un-acceptable to God, and unprofitable to our Selves. This spoil'd all the Religion of the Scribes and Pharifees. They made long Prayers, but it was in the Corners of the Streets, to be feen and admir'd for it: They gave Alms, but they founded a Trumpet to give notice of it: They fasted, but they disfigured their Faces, that their Fasting might appear to Men. In all their good Works they had an Eye to the Observance and Applause of the World, and were more concern'd for their own Honour, than for the Glory of God. Hence they are fo often branded with the Name of Hypocrites, and declared more incapable of the Kingdom of Heaven, than

Prov. xvi. 5. Dan. iv.

CHAP. I. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 219

the very Publicans and Harlots, who had Humility enough to confess, and repent of their Sins.

But there is another kind of Vanity which is still more abominable, and that is, when Men are proud of their Ability to commit any Vice, and ambitious to be esteem'd the first in the Rank of Offenders. "When they declare their Sin as Sodom, and hide it not, but take Pleafure in recounting their lewd Actions. This the Scripture justly styles, glorying in their Shame, and denounces a particular Woe against such Boasters: b Woe unto them that are mighty to drink Wine, and Men of Strength to mingle strong Drink.

OTHER Sorts of Pride are, overmuch Confidence, Assurance, obstinate Persisting in our own Ways against good Reason and the Persuasions of able Advisers; magisterially assuming a Power which belongs not to us, to dictate and prescribe to others. These are Dispositions no ways becoming the Followers of Jesus Christ, who hath set forth himself as a Pattern of Meekness and Lowliness to all his Disciples; and I have already intimated, that they are the Cause of Divisions and He-

resies in Religion.

AND thus much of the Nature of Pride, and the most noted and common Branches of it. I proceed to the other Extream of Humility, which is Pusillanimity, or a falling

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fhort of what one ought to do, out of a false Modesty, or Fear of Ostentation. And it is generally feen in these following In-Cances.

- 1. IN not exerting and imploying those Gifts which God hath bestowed on us, in the Office or Business to which he hath been pleased to call us. This Negligence is exprefly condemn'd in the Person of that unprofitable Servant, who went and digged in the Earth, and hid his Lord's Talent. It is not in our own Choice whether we will discharge the Duty of our Calling, but we are strictly bound to do it. And therefore any Magistrate or Minister must not fail in executing the necessary Parts of his Office, meerly out of Fear left he should be thought a forward Man, for doing that which perhaps his Brethren round about him have by their Milmanagement perverted, or brought into Difuse. To fuch treacherous Dealers belongs that Curfe, which is denounced against those who do the Work of the Lord negligently: A virtuous Emulation in good Things, is fo far from being a Breach of Humility and Modesty, that it hath ever been encouraged by the wifest of Men in all Ages and Parts of the World.
- 2. IN an Averseness to be seen performing any publick Duty of Piety or Charity. When we are in the Exercise of those good Works, which it concerns none but God and our own Souls to know, we are then indeed to avoid the

3. PERSONS in any Honourable Station or Imployment, should take Care not to fink the Dignity of their Profession by an affected Humility. In the Exercise of their Function they

fort of our Brethren. A MAN OF STORME 23.

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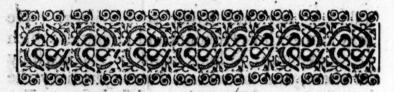
ought to appear in that diffinguishing Habit, and with that Gravity of Deportment, as may gain them a just Reverence and Authority? It is not an Argument of an humble, but a dissolute, degenerous Mind, to neglect any bonourable Appendage, or be too free and familiar in Words upon these Occasions. It is an Observation grounded upon the best Experience, that too much Familiarity begets Contempt. It doth fo, not only to the Person of Him who bears any grave Office, but likewife to the Office it felf which he bears, and he acts in Contradiction to all Sense and Reason, who thinks to preferve a due Reverence for himfelf, while he profitutes that of his Order. St. Paul, notwithstanding all his Precepts and Practice of Humility, hath told us, He magnified his Office, and therefore a Man may be very strict in those publick Regards, and yet be very humble in his private Capacity. Some in the same Ministry, have thought they have done it Service, by a very open, and (as they take it) good naturd Conversation, even as unreferv'd as the Vulgar themselves. But the constant ill Effects which attend such a Liberty, do fully demonstrate the Absurdity of their Fretence.

IN Thort, the Nature of Humility is fuch, as hinders no Man from taking his proper Place in the World, from using such Marks of Distinction as are proper to his Rank, or from

afferting any just Right or Privilege. He may aim at those Honours and Dignities which are above him, fo long as he strives lawfully for them, and labours to acquire them by the honest Arts of Ingenuity and Industry. For these are the Rewards of Virtue, and are defign'd to diffinguish the Diligent from the Slothful; and therefore it can be no Fault to feek after them. Nay, there are some Cases wherein even a Modest and Humble Man, may be allow'd to fet forth his own Worth, and enumerate his good Deeds; as St. Paul doth to the * Corinthians. And he is obliged to do this, when there is no other Way to stop the Mouth of Calumny, and remove any Slander which may be prejudicial to the Honour of God, or the Welfare of the Publick in Church or State.

Pine 2 Cor. xi.

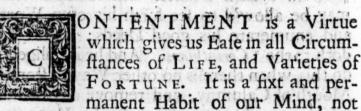




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od diffinguis de Difficent diven the

CONTENT MENT.



murmuring or repining at our Lor, but chearfully accepting that Portion which is dealt out to us. As it gives way to no unnecessary Anxieties, so it does not indulge the transient Excesses of Mirth, which like Lightning vanish in a Moment. It imparts a Beauty and Amiableness, to those who enjoy it, by testifying the Satisfaction of their Hearts in their Looks. The chearful and relign'd Christian, by a Complacency in the State affign'd him, difcovers a secret Approbation of the Dispensations of Providence. This happy Frame of Mind confifts in a constant habitual Gratitude to the great Author of our Beings. An inward Chearfulness is an implicit Praise and Thankfgiving for all the Determinations of the Divine Will. It is a Temper always even and

CHAP. II. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 225

and unruffled, whether under the Smiles or Frowns of the World: This calm and easie Disposition makes us Happy in our Selves, agreeable to those we converse with, and acceptable to Him whom we were made to please. How far the Infirmities of our Nature will allow us to advance towards this Virtue, will

appear by examining particular Cases.

FIRST then, it feems natural to be Content in the Day of Prosperity, when the Comforts of Life flow in upon us, and Success crowns our Undertakings; when we are healthy in our Bodies, happy in our Families, honourable in Reputation, supported by a Multitude of Friends, supplied with all Necessaries and Delights out of a plentiful Estate. Men generally pretend to be very easie in such Circumstances as these, and to have no craving or follicitous Thoughts after any thing further. But this for the most Part is but meer Pretence and Outlide. If a Man be an ill Man, (and God knows fuch make up the greatest Part of the World) he hath no folid Contentment, or Pleasure in all this; but is continually tortur'd and annoy'd with some restless Passion which is never to be satisfied. How far is the Ambitious Man, in the highest Pitch of human Glory, from being at the End of his Wishes? The last Conquests of Alexander feem'd to bring him no nearer the Thoughts of Peace, than he was when he first fer out from Macedon. The immense Riches of Haman, his numerous and gallant Retinue,

his Advancement above all the Princes and Servants of King Abasuerus, avail'd him nothing, by his own Confession, so long as Mor-decai, a poor Jew, with whom he had no Concern, refused to stand up and shew him Respect. To run through the whole Series of vexatious Passions, Avarice, Lust, Malice, Revenge, &c. and shew how they spoil the Enjoyment of the best outward Circumstances, by restless Pursuits after their Objects, and exquifite Remorfes when they have obtain'd them, would be tedious, and not very necessary; because these their mischievous Effects are generally well known and understood.

But when these outragious Furies are banished from the House of Plenty; when the Voice of Wrath and Clamor is not heard; when there are no proud and haughty Looks, no Rioting or Lasciviousness, no blaspheming of God, or Contempt of Religion; but Temperance, Soberness, and Modesty are preferv'd; when as Riches encrease, Works of Piety and Charity are multiplied, to the Honour of God, and the Benefit and Comfort of fuch as want; this is truly to enjoy a prosperous Condition; and thus the good Man alone enjoys it, because he alone makes this right Use of it.

Bur can this good Man possess his Soul in Patience, when he is in the adverse State, pressed on every Side, passing as it were through Briers and Thorns, labouring under . the Injuries of the World, and the Frowns

of Providence? Is there any Room for Peace and Contentment in such Afflictions? We are assured there is, by the Apostle St. Paul, who had experienced the severest Hardships which are incident to mortal Life; and after all, declares, He had learn'd in whatsoever State he

was, therewith to be Content.

THE Ground of this Contentment is the Faith of a good Christian, which fixes not upon Things Temporal, but Things Eternal; it places his Treasure in Heaven, and shews him he is in no Danger of losing it by the short Storms and Tempests of this Life. With this Prospect he can easily raise to himself several Arguments of Patience and Contentment under Afflictions. As, 1. He will look upon every Affliction (which he brings not upon himfelf by his own Fault or Mismanagement) as a fure Token of God's Fatherly Care and Love of him. With this Encouragement the Royal Preacher, and after him St. Paul, exhort us not to be weary of God's Correction; because he correcteth whom he loveth, even as a Father the Son in whom he delighteth. For, 2. An Affliction well improved, conduces much to the Amendment of our Lives; it puts us upon fifting and examining our felves, to difcover what it is which hath provoked out Heavenly Father to lay this Chastisement upon And it quickens us to the Practice of many other Virtues, which before lay conceal'd, and as it were dead in us. Tribulation

is the Tryal of our Faith; it worketh b Patience, and Pattence Experience, and Experience Hope. It teaches us to fee the Rod, and him who hath appointed it; to adore that good Hand which mercifully reclaims us by Corrections now, that we may not be condemn'd to fuffer for ever. 'Tis the not improving an Affliction that makes it a Curse, whereas if improv'd, 'tis as great a Bleffing as any God is pleased to dispense amongst the Children of Men; therefore we should be very thankful that he is pleased not to give us over to our own Heart's Luft, which would be the heaviest Curse that could befal us. 3. In Time of Affliction God is most nigh to his Servants, and most ready to strengthen and comfort them. He is styled by one who had often try'd him, " A very present Help in Trouble, not only to deliver out of it, but likewise to support under it. If he leads us into Temptation, he watches over us, to deliver us from the Evil of it. d He will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able to bear; but will with the Temptation make a Way to escape, that we may be able to bear it. And his Faithfulness herein hath been justified by the Suffrages of his most tryed Servants. St. Paul professes, that he could do all things through Christ who strengthned him: And he glories chiefly in his Infirmities, in Tribulations, in Diffresses, in Persecutions; for when I am weak, faith he, then am I frong. i. e.

Jam. i. 3. Rom. v. 3. Pfal. xlvi. 1. d 1 Cor. x. 13. When

CHAP. II. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. When I think my felf most unable to bear that Load of Afflictions which is laid upon me, then do I prefently feel my felf most wonderfully strengthen'd by the Power of God. 4. Afflictions well endur'd do not only endear us to God in this present Life, but will moreover augment our Felicities in the Kingdom of Heaven, as we are often affured by Christ and his Apostles. Blessed, says our Lord, a are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Rejoyce and be exceeding glad when ye suffer righteously; for great is your Reward in Heaven. We faint not, faith St. Paul, b tho' our outward Man perisb. For our light Affliction, which is but for a Moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory. 5. Afflictions are often neceffary to wean our Affections from this World. and fix them on the everlafting Joys above. We are too prone, when we have fufficient Means, to gratifie all our fenfual Defires, and take our Fill of Pleasures, to the utter Neglect and Ruin of our Immortal Souls. And therefore when we cannot be fafely trufted with all our good Things, 'tis best for us to part with them, or be reftrain'd by some sharp Dispenfation, from furfeiting on them. A fevere Fit of Sickness, or a Fall from a lofty to a mean Condition, or the Discipline of a Prison for fome Time, hath brought back many a Man from the Gates of Hell, and pluck'd him as a Brand out of the Fire. From some such Happy

Mat. v. 4, 12. 62 Cor. iv. 16.

Calamity (as I may call it) doth many a Man date the Salvation of his Soul. Had it not been for this one Misery, he had been

miserable to all Eternity.

AND thus I have reckon'd up some of the most considerable Reasons which may perfuade a Man to Patience and Contentment under Afflictions. But then the Patient (as I intimated before) must be a Man of Piety and Virtue; a Man of a found Christian Faith, who believes the Life of the World to come, and the Inheritance which Christ hath purchased for us there. And he must order his Conversation fo, that his Hopes may be confiftent with this Faith, and his Title clear to the Heavenly Promises. For otherwise, if his Prospect extends not beyond this World. he must of necessity be concern'd for it as his All, and it will be hard to find means to asswage his Grief, occasioned by great Losses and Afflictions. To fuch Comforters he will be apt to reply as Micah did, when he had lost his Idols: Te have taken away my Gods, and what have I more? And what is this that ye say unto me, What aileth thee? I confess indeed, That a chearful and contented Mind is very neceffary, confidering the many Croffes and Misfortunes to which all Estates of Men are fubject, to procure that small Share of Happiness which is attainable in this Life; so that the Man who hopes for nothing hereafter,

Judges xviii. 24.

would in common Prudence, choose to pass through all the Inequalities of Fortune with a smooth and even Temper. But whatever Face Men may put upon it, Inward Peace is certainly the Gift of God; which how should that Man ever expect to receive from Him. whose Hope and Trust is not in Him? or. Where should he seek for Satisfaction, when he hath mingled all Things about him with fo many Furies, by the Lies, Perjuries, Blafphemies, and all forts of Violence and Injuflice which he hath been guilty of? And thus much for the Ground of Contentment.

NOW though we are in Duty bound to be Content in the most abject Condition that can befall us, yet we are not obliged fo to approve of it, as to feek no Deliverance from The Church of God instructs us in our Daily Prayers, to supplicate for our selves and others, a happy Issue out of all Afflictions: and consequently we are permitted to use the Means proper for our Relief; as Medicines against Sickness; Recourse to the Law against grievous Wrongs and Oppressions; Diligence to raise our selves above a mean, necessitous Condition; Application to the Civil Powers, to release us from any Hardships they may have laid upon us. But if after all honest Endéavours used, we cannot better our Condition, we must contentedly acquiesce under the Burden, and fay, The Will of the Lord be done.

AND though we are to make a Difference between a Fast and a Festival, between Occasions of Mourning and Rejoycing; yet as to our General Lot, be it what it will, we ought to bear it chearfully and thankfully. Plato hath laid it down as a Principle in his Philosophy, That whatever is permitted to befall a Just Man, whether Poverty, Sickness, or any of those Things which seem to be Evils, it shall either in Life or Death conduce to his Good; and, that nothing would be more unhappy, than a Man who had never known Affliction. He compares Prosperity to the Indulgence of a fond Mother to her Child which often proves his Ruin: but God's Chastifements, to those of a wife Father, who would have his Sons exercised in Labour, Disappointment and Pain, that they may gather Strength, and improve their Fortitude. If a Heathen had this Sense of the Divine Severities, how much more should a Christian dutifully submit to them? Whose Profession is declared to be a Warfare, wherein he hath many Enemies to encounter, and his own Heart, the most dangerous of all; who must fuffer before he can triumph, and bear the Crofs in order to obtain the Crown.

CERTAINLY, it is some Reproach to Religion, for its Professors to be often complaining of and bemoaning their Circumstances, as if God were a hard Master, and had made the Terms of Salvation too rigorous. Whereas his Worship is no melancholy Ser-

yice;

vice; but he is best pleased with those who ferve him with a joyful Heart. It would grieve a Man to fee how few there are who understand the true Spirit of Christianity; how some contract a Gloominess even from the Practice of that Religion, which most enlivens and invigorates the Faculties of the Soul: whose Ways are Ways of Pleasantness, and all her Paths are Peace. How some Men indulge themselves in Passion and Wrath, others in Peevishness and Frowardness: one is Arrogant and Assuming, another Vain and Frothy; a third Morose and Censorious, and others addicted to other particular Humours and Singularities; contrary to that Spirit of Religion, which smooths the Roughness of our Natures, and teaches us to be of a calm and quiet Difpolition.

PHYSICIANS themselves will tell us, That a quiet and peaceable Mind, not disordered with violent Passions, nor oppressed with immoderate Cares and Anxieties, is a great Prefervative of Bodily Health. Which One good Effect of Contentment, would prevail with every prudent Man to habituate himself to it. But when the Mind it felf is more dangeroufly wounded by the contrary Passions, than the Body can be; when it is habitually indisposed for the Duties of Piety and Devotion, which very much confift in Praifes and Thankfgivings. and a chearful Acceptance even of the severest of God's Dispensations: when it is incapable of that Love and Good Will, that Affability

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and Courtesie which is due to Men; and in too great Disorder to administer Comfort to others, or encourage and support them under any Pressures; Then the End of our being here, is loft; we are dead both in a Spiritual and Civil Capacity; we not only defraud our Souls of those Blessed Fruits of the Holy Spirit, Love, Joy, Peace, Meekness, Gentleness, but we anticipate those infernal Pains, that Horror and Anguish which is the Scourge of damned Reprobates, and to which the Fiend of Difcontent will hurry us, except we cast him out, and be restored to a peaceable and Heavenly Frame of Mind.

I confess, this turbulent Spirit bath got fuch a Maftery over some Men, that one would scarce hope to see him disposses'd. But it is the Craft of the great Deceiver to make all his Powers look herce and gigantick, that fo he may terrifie his Slaves, and make them despair of ever recovering their Freedom. Yet a calm, but constant and unwearied Application, hath never fail'd to tame and fubdue the most outragious Lusts. Some of the ancient Philosophers have ventur'd by the mere Power of Nature to attack them. A Seneca. an Epictetus, have laid down Rules for maintaining the Tranquillity of the Mind against all those Accidents which commonly ruffle and discompose it. And shall the supernatural Grace of God, convey'd to us in the Means of Religion, be less serviceable to us? Or is it not the Prerogative of our Faith above all human

Human Wisdom, that it Triumphs over the World, and makes us more than Conquerors? It was well said of one concerning Alexander's Conquests, Bene ausus est vana contemnere; it was not so much that he ventur'd, but he saw there was really less Danger in Things, than other Men commonly apprehended. We abuse our selves with Airy Spectres, and murmur and complain when we are threatned, not hurt. If we would but approach them with a steddy Virtue, and sace them bravely, we should find them prove mere Bubbles, un-

able to do us any Mischief.

Let it, in the last Place, be a constant Rule with us, whatever our own Missortunes or Disadvantages are, never to seek for Contentment (as too many are apt to do) in restlecting upon those of other Persons. Partnership in Sufferings may alleviate the Calamity in some Cases; but to what purpose is it sought after, or rejoyced at, where every Man must bear his own Burden, and it cannot be divided? This is contrary even to a Pagan Rule of Charity, which forbids us to rejoyce at the Evils which befall other Men; and it justly provokes God to continue at least our own Sufferings upon us; and many times to increase and aggravate them.

^{*} Ne malis gaudeas alienis,



CHAP. III.

OF

CHASTITY.

HASTITY may well be fet in the Front of those Duties we owe to our Bodies, fince the Apostle opposes the contrary Vice, as the special Sin

against them. He that committeth Fornication. finneth against his own Body; i. e. Though all other outward Sins, as Theft, Murder, and the like, are committed by the Body as the Instrument; yet in the Sin of Uncleanness, the Body is not only the Instrument, but the Object also; for the unclean Person doth not only fin with his Body, but he fins against it. He enervates, and many times distempers and destroys it. At least, he fixes a Brand of Infamy upon it, fuch as no other Sin leaves behind it, degrading it from that excellent Honour whereunto God advanced it, by making it the Member of an Harlot. There are

^{2 1} Cor. vi. 18.

feveral other Arguments by which the Apostle in this Chapter pleads against Uncleannes; as, That our Bodies are the Members of Christ, as well as our Souls: That they are the Temples of the Holy Ghoft, fanctified for his Habitation and Service; and therefore must not be prophaned or defiled with noyfom Lufts, which are most contrary to his Purity: That they are to be raifed in Incorruption, and fashioned like unto Christ's Glorified Body: If they were to be for ever loft among Dust and Worms, then it were no great Matter how we used them; but since they are to be that Garment which our Souls shall wear to all Eternity, in the Presence of a most Pure and Holy Go D, it highly concerns us to keep them unspotted from the Flesh.

NOW for the particular Kinds and Degrees of Uncleanness, they are of so gross a Nature as may not well bear a very exact Description. Under the Letter of the Seventh Commandment, are contain'd not only the known Sins of Adultery and Fornication; but all other kinds of Filthiness, mention'd by Moses in the Eighteenth Chapter of Leviticus, and by St. Paul in the First Chapter to the

But it may suffice to observe, That we are so far from being tolerated in any Unclean Acts, that we are strictly restrain'd from the Lewdness of the Heart and Tongue. St. Paul allows not any Corrupt Communication to pro-

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^{*} Ephes. iv. 29.

ceed out of our Mouth. But our Bleffed Lord pronounces that Man guilty of Adultery. who doth but blook upon a Woman to lust after her in his Heart, Whereby all carnal Defires confented to, though never breaking out into Actions; and all dwelling and infifting on fuch Thoughts, and fancying of impure Objects with Delight, are Violations of Chaftity. And therefore he who easily gives a Loose to such Thoughts, ought to look upon himself as restrain'd from the outward Act, rather by fome Temporal Confideration, than by the Power of Conscience, or Motives of Religion: because these would oblige him to keep a clean Heart and a modest Tongue, as well as a Chafte Body. Befides, he who hath no Government of these, is in continual Danger of actual Enormities; it being much easier to abstain from the Beginnings of this Sin, than to confine it to mere Thoughts and Words. But above all, it is to be consider'd, That even these lower Degrees are such as render Men very odious in the Eves of God, who feeth the Heart, and approves of none who are not pure there. Bleffed are the pure in Heart, fays Chrift, for they fall fee God. We therefore shall not see him, if we take no Care to keep from the Defilement of luftful Thoughts. It hath been observed by some, That we never find any Lift of those Sins which shut Men out of the Kingdom of Heaven; but this of Uncleanness harh a special Place in it.

Marr. V. 28. 10000

THE Ill Consequences of this Sin are not easily reckon'd up. First of all, 'Tis one of those Sins which never go alone; it hath a long Train of black and hideous Vices attending it. It abounds with Lies and Perjuries, and the Violation of the most facred and folemn Vows: It occasions much Loss of Time, and Neglect of necessary Business. It oftentimes corrupts the whole Mass of Blood, and renders us Weak and Impotent. It brings a Stain and Blemish upon our Reputation, and many times transmits it to our Posterity. What a Multitude of People have fallen miferable Sacrifices to this inordinate Luft! fome in the Loss of their Lives, others of their Estates! How hath it ruin'd the Peace of Families, and fill'd them with dreadful Confusion and Disorder! How many Children derive the Diseases entailed upon this Sin in an Infirm Conflictution! It may not, perhaps, discover it self in their Younger Days; but in the Progress of Years, it bursts out with the greater Violence. How many fair Estates hath it devoured, and obliged the Heirs of them to take irregular Courfes for their Support, and finally hurried them to an Unfortunate End!

THE nauseous Disease which commonly follows upon the habitual Practice of this Vice, can be exceeded by nothing but the Racks and Tortures of the Guilty Conscience, and those Infernal Pains which are to succeed them in the Society of Unclean Spirits. For

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He who punishes this fort of Sinners with such terrible Judgments in this Life, what Place will He think too hot for their Lusts in the Pit of Destruction? They shall have their Portion, saith St. John, in the Lake which burneth with

Fire and Brimstone.

WITH what Resolution and Obstinacy then, should we arm our felves against all Temptations and Allurements to this Vice? We ought certainly to be always upon our Guard, that we be not infnared by the Baits and Wiles which are laid for us, to intangle us in the Bonds of this Iniquity, and make us Slaves to this bewitching Lust. Accordingly, we must take Care not to pamper the Body with too luxurious Feeding, not to frequent wanton Plays and Entertainments, and other Incentives to it, not to indulge our felves in Sleep and Idleness: but on the contrary, be diligent in our Callings, and pass our leisure Hours in some honest Recreations, and profitable, or at least innocent Conversation. And if a Temptation of this Nature will be intruding, reject it immediately, without fo much as giving it a Hearing; for a Parley in this Case is dangerous, and one may be betray'd by it. Above all, we must beg of God, the Fountain of Purity and Holiness,

TO sanctify our Hearts by the Inspiration of his Good Spirit, that our Souls and Bodies may be preserved clean and undefiled unto the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ!

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CHAP. IV.

TEMPERANCE.

HE Second Virtue which concerns our Body, is TEMPERANCE: whereby we are taught to abstain from all Unlawful Pleasures; and to use those that are Lawful with

due Moderation. We must particularly be careful, that we do not exceed in Eating and Drinking, Sleep, Recreation, and Ap-

parel.

THE End that we are to serve in these Things, is Bodily Health, and the Refreshment of our Spirits, that we may be the better able to perform all the Religious and Civil Duties of Life. It is a just Observation, That we must eat to live; and not live to eat. Not that we are limited to fuch a Quantity of Food, as will just keep Life and Soul together. It was one of the fore Judgments God threatned to bring upon the Jews, That they (bould eat

^{*} Egek. iv. 16.

Bread by Weight, and with Care, and drink Water by Measure, and with Astonishment. Plenty of Corn, and Wine, and Oyl, was always esteem'd a great Bleffing, for this plain Reafon, That we might be ferved in greater Plenty, than in Times of Scarcity. We may certainly make a Difference between a Feast and an ordinary Meal. Wine a is given to chear the Heart of Man, and Oyl to make his Face to sbine. But then 'tis presum'd, that for the most part we live sparingly, not studying senfual Gratifications, nor making Provision for the Flesh, to fulfill the Lusts thereof. Our Diet must be no more, either for the Quantity or Quality of it, than what our Health requires, and our Circumstances can well bear.

GLUTTONY and Drunkenness are not only Brutish, but Dangerous Sins; they not only transform Men into Beafts, but into the very worst of Beasts, or rather into Furies and Devils. They fet Nature in a Flame, dethrone Reason, and bring a Man under the Dominion of the vilest Lusts and Passions. The horrid Imprecations and Blasphemies which are uttered, the Rapes, Murders, and other Outrages which are committed in fuch Excesses, are not to be number'd. How many Thousands of Men have squander'd away fair Estates, reduced themselves and their Families to miserable Poverty, ruin'd the

² Pfaim civ. 15.

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Constitution of their Bodies, and the Faculties of their Souls, and unfitted themselves for the Service of Goo and Man, merely by intemperate Living? 'Tis a needful Caution which our Lord gives against these Sins : " Take beed, fays he, left at any time your Hearts be oversharged with Surfeiting and Drunkenness, and so that Day come upon you unawares. This may be underflood of a fober and vigilant waiting for our Lord's Coming to Judgment: But it may likewise serve very well to admonish us of the great Change we must all one Day make. Since this Life is fo short and fo uncertain, that we may be fnatch'd out of it with little or no Warning, in what a ferious and fober Frame of Mind ought we to preferve our felves? What a dreadful Thing is it to confider the State of the Drunkard, who is sometimes hurried out of the World in the midst of a Debauch, but can rarely be acquitted of Selfmurther, if we look at the Diffempers which he brings upon himself, which commonly cut him off many Years before his Natural Life would have expired? How shall he be able to lift up his Face before his Great Judge, when he is called to give an Account of that precious Time which he hath fo prodigally wasted, those good Creatures of God which he hath fo shamefully abused, that Reason and Understanding which he hath so strangely Stupisied, and that Life which he put an End

Luke XXI. 34.

to, before God's appointed Time? To fay nothing of the Part he hath in the Sins of his Companions, by helping to bring all these Evils upon them as well as himself. Can such a Wretch find any Grounds to hope, that his Brutish Soul shall ever taste of the Refined Pleasures of a future State? No, saith St. Paul, Be not deceived; Drunkards (ball not inherit the Kingdom of God; no more than other enormous Sinners, in whose Company he places

them. But to proceed:

THERE is, moreover, a Temperance to be observ'd in Sleep; which when it exceeds the Space allowed to necessary Refreshment, is very pernicious both to the Body and Soul. Experience teaches us, That it corrupts the Blood, exhausts the Spirits, wastes Natural Heat, and lays the Foundation of feveral Difeafes. It weakens the Memory, clouds the Understanding, and invites the Tempter to debauch the Soul with many loofe and vitious Thoughts. Besides, it is an utter Enemy to Business, and consequently an Impediment to Riches, Honours, and Advancement in the World. On which Account the Sluggard is often upbraided by Solomon, who fends him to the Ant to learn Industry, and forewarns him, that he will scarce have Rags left at last to cover his drowsie Carcass.

¹ Cor. vi. 10.

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SINCE Sleep is the Image of Death, one would wonder why any Rational Man should indulge it: For every Hour that we fpend in Sleep, may be taken out of the Account of Life; fo that a Man who fleeps a Fourth Part of his Time, may be faid at Threescore, to have been dead Fifteen Years of it. The Bed having fo near a Refemblance to the Grave, 'tis pretty hard to account how People come to be in Love with it. 'Tis more a vicious Habit which they contract, than any Necessity of Nature; for those who accustom themselves to Vigilance, and are withal Temperate in other Things, find Nature fatisfied with a very little Sleep.

LASTLY, For Temperance in Apparel: Cleanliness is commendable in All; but the Gayety and Fashion of it, is to be suited to our Quality and Circumstances in the World. 'Tis great Arrogance for Persons of mean Birth and Fortune to vye with the Rich and Noble in this respect. The Use of Cloathing, I confess, is not only to defend the Body from Cold and other Injuries, but likewise to beautifie and adorn it. As Man is Lord of all Earthly Creatures, he may lawfully use them for Rayment, as well as Food. However, we must take heed, that we value not our felves too much upon thefe external, inanimate Things, which shall all perilb

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perish in the using, as the Apostle observes: And it cannot but humble us, to confider That Man's Want of Cloathing is the Effect and Consequence of his Sin; and therefore he should not commit the like Sin again (A mean Pride) in the Use of it.

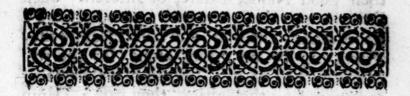
Ulmestone, to have been dead IN short, Temperance is a Virtue which restrains all our unruly Appetites from Luxury and Excess, and from the Vanities and Follies which our Extravagance throws us into. It regulates our Enjoyments by the Rules of Nature and Reason, and distinguishes Men from Brutes, and Men of Sense and Wisdom from Fools, by making a right and profitable Use of their good Things.



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CHAP. V.

RECREATIONS.



Y RECREATIONS we mean fuch pleasant Exercises and Entertainments, as are proper to refresh the Mind after it is tired with much Study or

ferious Business.

IN the Use of RECREATIONS, Two Things are to be observ'd. First, That the Matter of them be lawful and honest. Secondly, That we fpend not too much Time

upon them. Our first Care then must be, not to indulge any Pleasure or Diversion, which may impair our Health, stain our Reputation, difhonour the Office and Character we bear in the World; or which may give just Offence and Scandal to Others, or prejudice them in their

their good Name, Estate, or Interest. Such Diversions as these are very improperly call'd Recreations; the short and false Pleasure they afford, can by no means atone for the real Mischief they do us. Instead of exhibitanting and enlivening the Spirits, they caft a Damp upon them, and leave a Sting and Remorfe behind them. Even in Laughter, the Heart is forrowful; and the End of that Mirth is Heaviness. The great Seducer of Mankind conceals his Hook in gilded Baits, and deludes his Votaries with some present short-lived Gratifications, into great and lasting Miseries. Thus it is in all Sorts of Intemperance and Excess; the delicious Morfels which were fo fweet to the Palate, turn to Gall and Choler in the Stomach; and the Spirits which fly out in extravagant Mirth, leave a melancholy Faintness and Dejection of Mind. Or if the Heat and Vigour of Youth, should prove less fenfible of fuch pernicious Effects which attend a voluptuous Life, yet they will be fadly felt and remember'd in the Infirmities of old Age; which were enough, one would think, to deter any Rational Creature from plunging into Excesses so rashly as many do: Since, in the Judgment of an excellent 2 Person, he that eats and drinks fo as to bring the Gout or Stone upon him, tho' a great while hence, un-mans himself, and acts as a Beast. But besides the

Dr. Hammond, fee bis Life fol. p. 16.

Pains of the Body, in what fad and bitter Reflections do all unlawful Enjoyments end? how fast do their Dregs stick to the Soul, corrupting and poisoning the whole Spirit and Genius, and fettling into the worst of Habits? What a wretched and shameful Character is it, which we fometimes hear given of certain Persons, That they were once very ingenious Men, till they had drowned their Parts by immoderate Drinking, or lost themselves in a vain and idle Course of Life? But I need not here infift much on the ruinous Confequences of Excess, since I have spoken of them under the Heads of Chastity and Temperance. Let me only inculcate what I hinted at before, That we must not divert our selves at the Expence of another's Interest or Welfare. There are some Men who have a strange unhappy Genius this Way; they really delight in Mischief, and never please themselves so well. as when they abuse and exasperate other People. But if it be the worst Idea that we can form of the Devil himself, that he rejoyces in the Vexations and Torments of Men. what Opinion must we have of these Wretches who fet up for his Executioners, and chuse that Part which is most acceptable to him? The Sport of these Madmen is, to cast Firebrands, Arrows, and Death. Destruction and Unhappiness is in their Ways, and the Way of Peace have they not known. How much then are another Sort of Persons to be commended. mended, who are fo far from being pleased with feeing others abused and tormented. that they will not fo much as put the very Brutes to pain for their Sport and Diversion, but shun and condemn such Pastimes, (too much practifed in this Nation) wherein they are baited for the Entertainment of the

Spectators.

SECONDLY, Our Recreations must not be only lawful, but moderate; they must not devour too much of our precious Time. For what is the End of Recreation, but to refresh our oppressed Spirits, to unbend them a while, and give them Rest, that we may return to our Business again, with renewed Vigour and Application? When we are thus revived, we must have so much Command of our selves, as to break off, and proceed with the Business of our Profession; otherwise we shall act as imprudent a Part, as he who should be always doing fomething to procure a good Appetite, but never mind to take in folid Food, when his Stomach is fit to receive and digeft it. God who hath fent us into the World, to work while it is called to Day, will exact an Account of us, how we have imploy'd our Time; and tho' he graciously allows us sufficient for neceffary Refreshment by Sleep in the Night, and some Ease or Recreation in the Day; yet if we indulge our felves fo much in any of thefe, as to hinder, instead of advancing our principal Delign, it is to be fear'd our Righteous mended. Tudge

CHAP. V. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 251

Judge will sentence us, with the Appellation of wicked and slothful Servants at the last Day. For certainly he deserves no better a Character, who being in a State of Health and Strength, squanders away his Time in those Diversions, which are the proper Entertainment of none but sickly and infirm Con-

stitutions.

IN the Choice of our Recreations we should do well to prefer such, as are not only lawful in their own Nature, but likewise safe in their Tendencies. There are Games or Sports of feveral Sorts, which for the matter of them are not finful; but yet they commonly prove the Occasions of many gross Enormities, because those who use them, grow too much in Love with them; they hazard too much on the Chance of them, so as to impoverish their Families and deprive their Posterity of the Inheritance they were born to; they practife the Arts of Cheating and Lying, out of an immoderate Defire of Gain. This leads them into Quarrels, which are attended with Imprecations, Oaths and Blasphemies, and fometimes with Bloodshed and Loss of Life.

FOR these Reasons, the wiser and better Sort of Persons are very sparing in the Use even of lawful Games; and chuse rather to divert themselves with friendly Visits and innocent Conversation, or else to exchange a more knotty and painful, for a more easie and plea-

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fant kind of Study. Thus it is reported of Bishop Sanderson, that while he was a Country Clergyman, when his Thoughts were harasted with any perplex'd Studies, in which he was much exercised, he would divert himself with reading Genealogies and Heraldry. And his very Recreation had made him so perfect in them, that he could in a very short Time give an Account of the Descent, Arms and Antiquity of any of the Nobility or Gentry of this Nation. Many others by thus mixing Profit with their Pleasure, have much improved and accomplished themselves in their most leisure Hours.

See bis Life by J. Walton, wolw slodt sluns

In Love with them; they hazard too much on the Chance of them, to as to impoverifficher. Families and deprive their Potterity of the Inheritance the Arts of an immode of an immode of an into them into them into them into them into the with imprecation of and fonctime.

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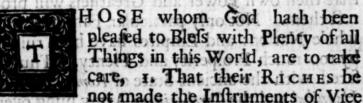


CHAP. VI.

DUTIES

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R I C H, &c.



and Sin. 2. That they manage them fo as to be the Means of doing much good in the World.

First, Rich Men must take heed that the Portion of good Things God hath entrusted them with, be not perverted to the Service of Sin and Satan. There are many pernicious Lusts which attend a prosperous and wealthy State. It is hard for a Man to possess much, and not to set his Heart too much upon it, not to be incumber'd and distracted with worldly Cares and Business, so at to neglect his better Part, the Improvement

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of his spiritual Knowledge and Salvation of his Soul. Riches are apt to extinguish that lively Sense we ought to have of our continual Dependance on God; to puff us up with Pride, and perswade us that we are self-sufficient; they deaden our Zeal in Prayer, and choak the good Seed of God's Word fown in our Hearts. They ferve as Fuel to fenfual Affections, and carry debauched Persons thro' all their lewd Practices. They make ambitious Spirits infolent and apt to oppress their Inferiors. 'Tis lamentable to observe how many Persons of high Birth and Fortune, especially in their youthful Blood, break through all the Laws of God and Man, in Confidence that their own Power and Greatness will protect them. Not only particular Families, but whole Nations and Empires have been ruin'd by too much Prosperity and Plenty. Thus it fared with the ancient State of Rome. While Hannibal and the Carthaginian Army hung over them like a Tempest, and kept them in Fear, they were eminently first in the Practice of Religion and Virtue. But when the Roman Arms prevail'd against Carthage, so far as to have it intirely at their Disposal, some of their most prudent Counsellors declared against the utter Excision of it, fearing that the Bridle being once taken off, the Roman People would rush into all manner of vitious and impious Courfes; as indeed, upon the Removal of this. Reftraint, they quickly did. And the fame thing hath happen'd in Christians as before anto neglect his better Part, the Improvement

in Pagan Rome. Its gross Errors and Corruptions have grown up when the Storms of Persecution were blown over, and a long Tranquillity and Sunshine of Prosperity succeeded. And may we not fetch a like Instance from the People of Ifrael, when those Thorns in their Sides, the old Inhabitants of Canaan were quite extirpated? How did their Fulness and Security make them forget their Almighty Deliverer and Benefactor? Notwithstanding that folemn Precaution given them by Moses, . When thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly Houses and dwelt therein: and when thy Herds and thy Flocks multiply, and thy Silver and thy Gold, and all that thou hast is multiplied: then beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God; and Say in thine Heart, My Power, and the Might of mine Hand hath gotten me this Wealth. And thus I might proceed to the End of the Prophets, and thence to the Evangelists and Apostles, in all which we find this Lesson constantly inculcated, That we must not set our Hearts upon Riches; that they are apt to alienate our Affections from God, and make it hard for us to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; that we cannot ferve God and Mammon; that if any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him: With much more to the same Purpose, intimating how dangerous an easie and plentiful Estate is to our spiritual Welfare. I shall only add the

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² Deut. viii. 11.

modern Censure of that judicious Divine Dr. Hammond, who living to fee the Ruin of Monarchy and Episcopacy in this Nation, and heartily wishing they might both be restored, yet observ'd withal, "That Persecution was generally the happiest State of the Church; " that the then grew fastest, when She was " pruned most. That all kind of Prosperity, " even that which we think we can most ju-" flifie, the flourishing of a Church and Monar-" chy, is treacherous and dangerous; and no-" thing so intirely safe and wholesome, as to " be continued under God's Disciplines. That " those who are not better'd by fuch Me-

" thods, would certainly be intoxicated and " destroy'd by the pleasanter Draughts.

THE Folly of many Rich Men is prodigious, in that they effeem their Wealth as the greatest of Bleslings. They stick at nothing, to they may but add to their Heaps. If they have any God, it is the Mammon of Un-righteoniness, who commands their Obedience against all the Laws of Piery and Virtue. When the rapacious Pharifees heard our Bleffed Lord preach against Coverousness, they derided him. But, alas! Multirudes who by Baptifin were made his Disciples, do the same every Day. They despise those Doctrines which recommend Spiritual above Temporal good Things, and represent Earth as nothing in comparison of Heaven. They think it some

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Mandon See bis Life Fol. p. 28,

dessening of their Greatness to submit to the Rules of Religion, and betray any Fear of God. And yet without his Love and Favour. how empty are all their Riches? They cannot deliver them from the Hands of their Enemies, nor give them a Body free from Difeases and Pains, nor release the Mind from guilty Fears, and importunate Lufts and Paffions, which are the Bane of all outward Enjoyments. Indeed, if we confider Things aright, we shall find, that Riches are but an Adjunct, not the prime, fundamental Cause of worldly Happiness. There must be Mens sana in corpore sano, a good Conscience and a sound Constitution, before a Man can have a true Relish of any thing he enjoys. But before all thefe. we must endeavour to make God gracious and favourable to us, and then we may be happy, tho' denied the good Things of this Life, or deprived of them by the various Changes and Accidents which daily happen in the World.

THE only Advantage which the Rich Man hath above the Poor, is, the good Use he makes of his Riches; not in taking his Fill of sensual Pleasures, and exalting himself like the unjust Judge in the Gospel, above the Laws of God and Man; but in procuring, as much as in him lies, the Welfare of all Men, beginning with his own Family, and forming all such as are under his Charge, to the best Principles of Religion and Virtue. And here I cannot but with Grief observe, how unfor-

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tunate our Nation too commonly is, in young Gentlemen of good Quality and Fortune, who instead of being an Honour, are a Reproach and Blemish to the Place they fill; who glory in their Shame, and are odious Examples of Vice and Lewdness. This casts a fevere, but just Reflection on the Management of their Parents, who did not take care to have their tender Years feafon'd with right Notions of God and Religion, but ventur'd them abroad in the World, without the fovereign Antidote of wholesome Instructions against the Infection of wicked Men. Surely if these Parents had any Love, I will not fay for the Souls, but the Bodies and Estates of their Children, they would take care to educate them in fuch virtuous Rules, as might, in all Probability, restrain them from Gaming, Intemperance, Uncleanness, and other Vices; for the Principles of Religion will teach Men to debar themselves from many expensive Vices, and fo by this Means fave a great Part of their Estates, and likewise preserve their Bodies from those Diseases which are the necessary Effects of Debauchery, and cut them off in the Strength and Flower of their Age. I shall hardly be allow'd to urge the Wounds, and Stains which Vice leaves upon the facred Character of Honour. Yet Books of Heraldry will inform us, that as Coats of Arms were at first obtain'd by some brave and virtuous Action, fo in those best Times, they were liable to Forfeiture by a profligate Life. Ob Celera

CHAP. VI. CHRISTIAN REDIGION. 259

fcelera & vita turpitudinem honesta Nobilitatis decore privetur, says the Law, quia nulla sine honestate Nobilitas. But the Degeneracy of later Ages hath in a great measure superseded such good Laws, and lest Honour in Conjunction with the most odious Vices.

However, a plentiful Estate meeting with a truly Great and Virtuous Soul, affords extraordinary Opportunities of doing Service both to GoD and Man, which is the Second Thing that every Rich Person is to propose to himself. Is a Man's Lot fallen in a fair Ground? Hath he a goodly Heritage? Doth his Cup overflow with the Ovl of Joy and Gladness? Is his Station in the high Places of Honour and Power? What a large Field hath he of Praises and Thanksgivings to the KING of Kings, and LORD of Lords, whose Hand dispenseth the Blessings of this Life, taking them from one, and giving them to another! who is pleased to make him one of his principal Stewards, intrusting him with the greatest Number of Talents, and thereby giving him an Opportunity to purchase to himself an exceeding great Reward in the Kingdom of Heaven. How much is it in his Power to advance True Religion and Virtue in the World, by heartily embracing them himself, and thereby recommending them to others who are under his Influence, and will be determin'd in their Practice by his Example!

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ple! What a Glorious Instrument may he be in God's Hands, of dispensing Bleffings of all forts round about him, by imparting some of his Goods to feed the Hungry, cloath the Naked, ranfom the Prisoner, and encourage every pious and useful Design! How happily may his Sagacity defeat the Wiles of fraudulent and malicious Men, and maintain the Cause of defenceless Innocence against the mighty Oppressor! Indeed there is no outward Calamity we can think of, but Wealth and Power in the Hands of a Good Man, will administer Relief to it. But then with regard to himself, the Great Man hath Opportunities to illustrate those Virtues which can hardly appear in a low Fortune. In the midst of the Ornaments and Enfigns of Honour, to be Meek and Condescending; in Crowds of Flatterers and Admirers, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; to be Temperate at a Table which abounds with the most powerful Temptations to Luxury, and Chafte and Modest where no Opportunities are Wanting to be otherwise: These are Virtues which merit the Praise and Admiration of all Men, and give him a near Resemblance to the Author and Fountain of all Goodness.

LET but Rich Men thus endeavour to make themselves Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness, by expending it in such a way as may provide them Bags which wax CHAP. VI. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 261 not old, a Treasure in the Heavens. Let them ufe this World as not abusing it, considering that the Fashion of it passeth away, and that in a short Time they must possess no more of it, than the poorest Beggar. Let them remember, That how high foever they may be in the World, yet they are always in the View of that Glorious Being who is exalted infinitely more above them, than they are above the meanest of their Brethren: and that, however they may abound in all Things. they have nothing but what they receiv'd from Him, who fees how they employ it, and will reckon with them for it; and though He is no Respecter of Persons, yet He is a strict Observer of every Man's Works; according to the Goodness and Greatness of which, he will proportion his everlafting Rewards. If Rich Men would but act agreeably to these Considerations, they would not suffer their Advancements and Grandeur to minister to their Pride and Vain-glory; and they might, with Him who had well improved the greatest Number of Talents, obtain the first and highest Places in the Heavenly Kingdom of their LORD.

Above, not on Things on the Earth. Mortific therefore your Members, &c. Inordinate Affe-

[·] Col. iii. 2. 5.

Etions, Evil Concupiscence, and Covetousness. which is Idolatry. The Rich Man faid to his Soul, Thou hast much Goods, laid up for many Years; take thine Ease, Eat, Drink, and be Merry: but God faid unto him, Thou Fool! this Night thy Soul fall be required of thee; then whose shall those Things be, which thou hast provided? So is he who layeth up Treasure for himself, and is not Rich. towards God. But thou, O Man! flee thefe Things. Charge them who be Rich in this World, That they be not High-minded, nor Truft in uncertain Riches, but in the Living Gon; who giveth all Things richly to enjoy, that they do Good, that they be Rich in Good Works, ready to Distribute, laying up for themselves a good Foundation against the Time to come, that they may lay hold on Eternal will proportion his everlasting Rewards. He

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their Pride and Vain-glory; and they mights with Him who had well improved the createst Number of Talents obtain the first and highest Places *** Kingdom of

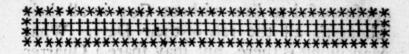
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and Concern of a better Life. Not that they

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POORER Sort.

S for the Poorer Sort of People, they are represented by the Servant who was intrusted with One Talent: and in Him they may learn, That the Smallness of their Trust will

not excuse their Neglect of it, but they shall be strictly accountable for that common Capacity with which God hath endued them, the Faith of Jesus Christ, whereunto he hath called them, and the Opportunities he affords them to improve these Gifts of Nature and Grace, by the Publick Ministry, as well as by Religious Conversation, Reading or Hearing in Private. To those who must live by the Sweat of their Brows, and the Labour of their Hands, God hath given Six Days in Seven for the Exercise of their ordinary Callings; referving but One of this Number to Himself, call'd therefore the LORD's DAY; which is the Weekly Return of their Publick Worship, when they must wholly lay aside their Worldly Affairs, and apply themselves seriously to the Care and

and Concern of a better Life. Not that they are supposed to live without Gop in all their Thoughts all the rest of their Days. What Man living is there, but may spare a Quarter of an Hour at a Time, or something more, every Morning and Evening, to confess his Sins to God, to praise him for his Mercies, and to implore his Gracious and Fatherly Protection from all Dangers Ghoftly and Bodily? Who can want Time to invocate the Bleffing of God upon his Bodily Food, as often as he receives it, and to render him Praife and Thanks for the fame? How many Hours in a Week are commonly fquander'd away by the most indigent and drudging Persons, either in downright Inactivity, or vain, unprofitable Discourse? and can they want Leisure to lift up their Hearts to God in Prayer, and devout Meditations and Conferences? However they may delude themselves and the World with fuch Pretences, yet the Searcher of Hearts will not be so deceived: He knows their downlitting, and their up-rising, and understands all their ways; and how much Room they have for Spiritual Things, even in the Course of their Daily Life. Thefe Words, faith he, which I command thee, shall be in thine Heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy Children, and Chalt talk of them when thou littest in thine House, and when thou walkest by the Way, and when thou liest down,

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and thou rifest up. Were the common People among the Jews obliged to this habitual Piety and Devotion, and can we think that the Professors of a more excellent and refined Way of Worship are more at Liberty to be carnally minded? Surely No; St. Paul pronounces it as an universal Truth, That to be carnally minded is Death; and therefore he requires all Christians to mortise their carnal Lusts, and to set their Affections on Things Above. And Christ said unto the People who follow'd Him for the Loaves: Labour not for the Meat that perisbeth, but for that Meat which endureth unto

everlasting Life,

WE cannot consider the Character of a true Christian Spirit, but we must fadly bewail the Degeneracy of the Vulgar at this Day, and the monstrous Growth of those Vices which are a flat Contradiction to it. Things are come to that pass, that he is effeem'd a very good Man, who hath only kept the Negative Part of the Commandments: if he hath not robbed or defrauded his Neighbour; if he be free from those mean Vices of Drunkenness, profane Swearing and Cursing. obfeene and filthy Difcourfe, which the' they fink Men as low as the Brutes, yet are they fo common among the lowest Rank of Men. that they hardly take them to be any Faults at all; nay, fometimes they are fo infatuated. as to glory and pride themselves in them, as if they were rare and valuable Accomplishments. no neM malanda

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INDEED it is Pity, fince the Divine Judgments due to these Sins are not commonly executed in this World, there are not more fevere and frequent Inflictions of those Temporal Punishments enacted by the Civil Authority, If they could not in Time change the Hearts of Men, they would at least refrain them from wounding Religious Ears with their outragious Tongues, and from encouraging the younger Sort by their lewd Examples to run with them into the same Excesses of Riot. And if to the due Execution of these Laws, were added the voluntary, unanimous Resolution of those who keep domestick Servants, and imploy Labourers, not to entertain any in their Bulinels, who after fufficient Admonition, should prefumptuously offend in any of the aforesaid Respects, we might then hope to fee a People more worthy of the Christian Name, and be less apprehensive of those publick Judgments, and that fiery Indignation which we justly fear should break forth upon a sinful Nation.

IT is a deplorable Argument of the Decay of Christian Faith amongst Men, that the poorer Sort who have little or no Hopes of enjoying the Happiness of this Life, are no more concern'd for that which is to come. To be miserable both in Soul and Body, to be despised of Men and hated of God, is a Condicion fo forlorn and deftitute, that we may well wonder how any thinking Man can support himfelf CHAP. VI. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 267

himself under it without Distraction. But when the Poor in this World are rich in Faith, when they look for an Inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven, and live so as to secure to themselves the Favour and Love of God, then their afflicted, despised Condition cannot be irksome to them, but rather a Sign that they are in the straight Way and narrow Path that leadeth to Everlasting Life; then they will bear their Poverty, not only with Parience but Chearfulness, and bless God for conforming them in this Respect to the Image of his Son Jesus Christ, who they he was rich, yet for our Sakes he became poor, and thereby hath fanctified and honoured the low Estate.

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Cernment of a fober and virtuous LIFE, with Respect to our Welfare in this World, as well as the next: It remains in the last Place, to add some necessary Motives to arm our selves with unchangeable RESOLUTIONS against all the TEMPTATIONS that may offer to pervert us.

IT is a shameful Disparagement both of our Faith and Understanding, to accept of any Honour, Profit, or Pleasure, which this World can afford, as an Equivalent for our Interest in the Love of God, and that Heavenly Inheritance which he hath entail'd on

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our Obedience. Let the present Advantages be never fo great, if they are inconsistent with any Part of our Duty, we may reject them with this Answer, That we shall be unspeakable Lofers by them. What would it profit us to gain the Friendship of all Mankind, with the Forfeiture of the Divine Favour? To fill our Houses with Silver and Gold, and at the same Time to lay our selves under the heavy Curfe of God's Wrath? It was the melancholy Reflexion of a Prince's Favourite in Difgrace, that if he had been as careful to please his God, as he had been to flatter and humour his Prince in his irregular Courfes, he would not have forfaken him in his old Age. No, God is infinitely more constant than any Patron upon Earth; and his Love and Favour is like his Being, everlasting. Moses had a just Sense of this, when he refused to be called the Son of Pharaoh's Daughter; esteeming the Reproach of Christ greater Riches than the Treasures of Egypt : for he had Respect unto the Recompense of Reward: that Reward which would shortly commence in immortal Glory; and thefore did infinitely out-weigh the short liv'd Pleasures of Sin on the one Hand, and the as fhort Sufferings for a good Cause on the other. This easily determines a wife Man in his Choice, and even an ill Man in his Judgment, For Balaam who ferved for the Wages of Unrighteousness, yet wish'd his End might be like one of the Servants of God, and that he might die the Death of the Righteous. But the Reward

ward of refifting Temptation is not always deferr'd to another Life; a great and victorious Virtue hath been crown'd even in this World. Had not Joseph been more afraid of sinning against God, than offending his wanton Mistress, he had never risen out of his Vassalage, to be Pharaoh's prime Minister, and Lord of all Egypt. When any Temptation offers it self, let us fay with him, How can I do this great Wickedness, and fin against God? and with Solomon, My Son, if Sinners entice thee, consent thou not. That which is truly honourable and virtuous (fays one of the Philosophers) stands its Ground; it is still taking deeper Root, and spreading larger Branches; but whatever is besides the Principles of Conscience and Honesty, is very apt to vanish, and drops like Blossoms in the Spring. An Obfervation fo very like that of the Psalmift, that it is fit they should be put together. I have seen the Wicked in great Power, and spreading himself like a green Bay-Tree; yet he passed away, and, lo! he was not : I fought him, but he could not be found. Mark the perfect Man, and be-hold the Upright: for the End of that Man is Peace.

But it is not enough for us to make general Resolutions against Temptations: We must like Men in a besieged City, observe where we are weakest, and imploy our strongest Forces about such Places. Thus he who

^{*} Pfal. xxxvii.

hath been guilty of Excesses in Drinking. should not venture himself into Company, which is likely to run beyond the Bounds of Moderation. He who is apt to be criminal in his Love of Women, should like Job, make a Covenant with his Eyes not to look too much upon them. That Person's Virtue is much to be suspected, who makes near Approaches to pleasing Temptations. Can a Man take Fire in his Bosom, says Solomon, and his Cloaths not be burnt? 'Tis almost as reafonable to hope that Fire will not burn, as that a Man shall escape innocent from that Temptation which he is inclin'd to, if he converses freely with it. Men of uncommon Prudence and Continence, have yet chofe to keep out of the Influence of fuch alluring Objects, When Ulysses sail'd by the Sirens, he order'd himself to be tied to the Mast, lest he should be drawn away by their singing. It is reported of Agesilaus the Lacedemonian, that he refused to salute a beautiful Maid that was presented to him; and of Cyrus the Persian, that he would not fee Panthea, another fair Wo-'Tis no leffening of any Man's Courage or Conduct, to own himself not invincible. Indeed all the Appetites and Passions of Man are implanted in him for very good Reasons; and it is fit they should be moved and wrought upon by their proper Objects. But when the Laws of Morality and Religion, make the Application of those Objects unlawful; then 'tis a Point of Wisdom to keep at a Distance; and our

our daily Prayers teach it us; Lead us not into

Temptation.

have been Active as well as Passive in Temptations; in what Cases you have by Word or Example allured others to Lust or Intemperance, excited them to blind Rage, or hindred and discouraged them from the Practice of any Duty. And be as sollicitous to bend them the other way, by shewing them your own and their Error, and inviting them to joyn with you in a serious Repentance; that so, however you have been Partaker in their Sins, you may be acquitted from bearing a Share of their Punishment.



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Christian's Companion:

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OF THE

Christian Religion.

PART IV.

Containing Our

DUTY

TO OUR

NEIGHBOUR.

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LONDON:

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OF OUR

DUTY

TO OUR

NEIGHBOUR,

PART IV. CHAP. I.

Some Considerations previous to MARRIAGE.



EFORE I come to speak of the Duties of the MARRIED STATE, it may not be amiss to premise a Word or two of ADVICE to such as are yet

Single, and under Deliberations of Changing their Condition.

I CANNOT

I CANNOT begin better than with recommending to them a ferious and frequent Perusal of the Office of MATRIMONY in our Service-Book. For I think it very preposterous to ingage in a folemn Covenant, before you have well consider'd what the Articles of that Covenant are. And if you allow these a due Examination, you will be very careful what fort of Person you choose for your Confort. For upon this Choice the Happiness or Milery of your Future Life depends. There is no putting off these Bonds at Pleasure: when once the Knot is tyed, 'tis like the Gordian Knot, which Alexander, after much Trouble to untie it, at last hew'd in Pieces. 'Tis no otherwise to be dissolved but by the Knife of Fate. And therefore, before you engage, it behoves you to fee that you have an agreeable Toke-fellow. How to know this before-hand, is indeed fomething difficult: Yet there are good Grounds to hope well, if you advance by fair and regular Steps; of which I will fuggest to you some of the most considerable.

AND First, Having begg'd of GOD to Direct you in this weighty Affair, resolve to make none the Partner of your Bed and For-tune, who will not readily concur with you in His Worship. I know tis common for Persons of different Principles in Religion, to Marry together: but certainly they are more govern'd by carnal Motives, than by any Regard

gard to Truth and Unity; and are either ignorant or forgetful of the Laws both of the Old and New Testament, which expressly prohibit this. Moles forbidding the People of Ifrael to have any Commerce with the Canaanites, peremptorily restrains them in this: " Thou Shalt not make Marriages with them : thy Daughter thou Chalt not give unto his Son; nor his Daughter Shalt thou take unto thy Son. For they will turn away thy Sons from following Me, that they may serve other Gods. And in Prospect of the same fatal Confequence, St. Paul commands the converted Corinthians, b Not to be unequally Toked with Unbelievers. Thus these prudent Lawgivers would not venture to make Profelytes of the Heathen, by marrying their People with them. They were more apprehensive that the Wife might corrupt her Husband, than the Husband convert his Wife. And they knew that at best one principal End of Conjugal Society would be defeated, which is, That the Married Persons should joyn together in their Prayers, and mutually affift each other in all Divine Offices, both Publick and

NEXT after Religion, the Parentage and Education of the Person should be regarded. For confidering how many finful Propentions there are in every one of us, a prudent Per-

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fon will be careful in this Case, not to be joyned to one, whose Natural Stock hath been improved by corrupt Examples. A polluted Fountain cannot fend forth pure Streams neither, as our Lord justly reasons, do Men gather Grapes of Thorns, or Figs of Thiftles. Children are very apt to imitate the Manners of their Parents, not only by a Communication of Natures, and the early Prepossessions of their tender Minds, but likewise upon the Authority of their Example. And though we don't by any means own the Distinctions of Virtue and Vice to be founded in Education. vet the Inclinations to them most certainly are. and that fo ftrongly, that oftentimes the clearest Convictions and united Forces of Religion and Interest, can never eradicate them. Hence we fee fome Vices as Hereditary in Families, as their Estates and Honours.

THIRDLY, In Matters of Estate and Fortune, the Candidates of Matrimony should be so far from promising more than can be perform'd; that on the contrary, I would advise them to represent their Circumstances rather meaner than what they really are. Whatever exceeds Expectation after Marriage, will prove a new Increase of Love and Satisfaction. Whereas to procure one's Fortune to be overrated by common Fame, and infnare others with it, may prove at last the worst of Injuries. For a Man may not only deserve, but have

THAP. I. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 279 have real Occasion for that Portion of Money he depends on; and to be disappointed of it, may cast him into such Straits, as finally shall ruin his Credit and Dealings in the World.

But fuppose the Mistake should not prove quite so destructive; yet why must Lovers lye at the Catch one for another, and be brought together by Cheat and Imposture? Why must a Woman's Portion be wrapt up in the Clouds, and made such an unspeakable Secret and Mystery? Is it because she doubts her Personal Accomplishments will not sufficiently recommend her? Alas! he that courts the Fortune, rather than the Owner of it, will cool in his Affections proportionably as that wastes; and if it prove considerably less than was given out, nothing but Reproaches and ill Usage must be expected from his exasperated Spirit.

The like Praud is no less Criminal on the Man's side, who knowing his Circumstances to be desperate, yet upon the Credit of his Estate or Stock, obtains a considerable Fortune by Marriage, which he consumes in his old licentious Courses, reducing himself to Exile or a Prison; and his Wife and Children (if she prove a Mother) to the Want of all Things at present, and the melancholy Prospect of continuing for ever in the same for-

Jorn Condition.

one of the Parties.

A Man who understands his Happiness will not be so fond of a Great as a Good Fortune : I mean, what the Parents are justly possess'd of, and can beflow upon their Child with a good Conscience. For though the Daughter be never fo innocent, as to her own Person, yet if her Parents endow her with the Fruits of their Fraud. Extention, or Oppression, there is Reason to fear left it should bring a Curse with it, and infect the rest of a Man's Substance. The Divine Sentence past upon such Riches, is, That they shall be confumed; and that while Parents are heaping up their unjust Gains for their Children, God lays up a Curse for them: and I doubt not but Observation will fully confirm the Truth of this.

s given our, nothing but Reproaches But after all, though Religion, Family, Education, and Fortune should prove very good, yet there are fome Canonical Impediments which may make it Unlawful for a Couple to Marry : as, A Pre-contract, or former Engagement of either Party to Marry another Perfon and certain Degrees of Kindred by Blood or Affinity; which, however you may be perspaded of in your own Mind, as to the Morality of them, yet while the Ecclefiastical Law stands as it doth, they are not only Hindrances of Marriage, but Grounds of its Dissolution, even after it is solemnized, Besides, one of the Parties, if Married by Licence, makes - 7 1 1

makes Oath. That there are none of these Impediments in their Case; and the Minister who Marries them, adjures them, as they will answer it at the Last Day, to confess, if they know of any Impediment, why they may not Lawfully be joyn'd together in Matrimony. And however they may forbear to discover it in Words, yet if they stiffe Conscience when it cries out within them, they must not hope to prosper in a Marriage, which was obtain'd by prevaricating with God and Man.

WHEN they find the Way clear from these Obstructions, if they are under the Power of Parents or Guardians, they must not presume to dispose of themselves in Marriage without their Advice and Confent. This is supposed by the Church in that Question, Who giveth this Woman to be married to this Man? And then her Father or Friend takes her by the Hand, and gives her to the Minister, and the Minister to the Bridegroom. Which though it be done to all Women, yet was, I doubt not, intended for fuch as have Parents or Guardians, to fliew, that they cannot give away themselves. And the Licence fays expressly, That without their Confent, this shall be no Licence. Indeed all Laws, not only of God and Nations, but of Nature it felf, require this, A Man's Daughter is certainly nearer to him than any of his Goods; and therefore to infinuate with her, and steal, first her

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Affections, and then her Person, is the highest Injury, and worst kind of Robbery. Other Losses are retrievable; but this is a Damage which can never be repaired. Nay, you are her greatest Enemy, while you pretend to be her best Friend: You make her guilty of grievous Impiety against God and her Parents, by drawing her to the last Act of Disobedience, even to the breaking of their Hearts, if they be very tender of her. Instead of their Company, and Rejoycings, and Bleffings at her Wedding. she is now carried from them by a clandestine Marriage, which commonly ends (by the just Judgment of God) in as much Sorrow to herfelf, as it created to them. The most passionate Lover often proves but an unkind Husband, and the Children when grown up, take the same Liberty to dispose of themfelves.

ON the other Hand, Where Children have been merely passive, and resign'd themselves to the Disposal of their Parents, their Marriage hath commonly been very prosperous; and there are Two good Reasons for it:

1. That Divine Benediction which is the peculiar Portion of Dutiful Children, bestow'd on them by Him who can easily make Husband and Wife amiable to each other, however they may appear to the rest of the World.

2. 'Tis highly probable that Parents will make better Matches for their Children, than they can for themselves; because Parents act by Reason:

CHAP. I. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 283

Reason: They have try'd the State already, and know what makes it Comfortable or otherwise; they will take care of Circumstances, Temper, Reputation, and every Thing that is requisite. Whereas Young Persons are unexperienced, and more intent upon Beauty, Gallantry, and an agreeable Conversation, by which they are diverted from those Things which are more durable and essential to a Happy Life.

THESE are the PRECAUTIONS which I had to offer, in order to make a Wise and Happy Choice in Marriage. I now proceed to consider the Duties of Such as are already in that State.



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HUSBANDS to their WIVES.



S a MAN should be Cautious in Chusing a WIFE, so he must be Constant in Loying her; and that not with a common Degree of Love, but as his own Body,

or as Christ loveth his Church South which Measures of Love St. Paid incidentes in the Fifth Chapter of his Epistle to the Ephesians; observing in the one Inflance, That Christ gave Himself, that is, laid down his Life for the Church; and in the other, That no Man ever yet hated his own Fush, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church. Which fally proves that Gonjugal Love is indifpenfably necessary both by the Laws of Nature and Religion.

AND

AND indeed, Experience testifies, That no Marriage Duty can be well perform'd without Love. For the Man having taken the Woman from all her Friends and Relations. and, by making her his Wife, acquired a full Power and Authority over her Body and Goods; if this Power be not temper'd with Love, it will degenerate into Tyranny, and the Woman is reduced to the worst State of Slavery; a Slavery uncapable of the Benefit of Redemption, and not to be terminated by any thing but Death. But God and Nature have fo order'd it, that the Husband cannot abuse his Wife, but at the fame time he hurts and punishes himself. For his own Happiness consists in mutual Returns of Love from his Wife. But what Pleasure can he take in finding himself loved by her, if he hath no just Value and Esteem for her? What Fetters' must the Bonds of Matrimony be to him, who is daily fretted and gall'd by them, and forcibly held to the Society of a Person, with whom he is not united in Affection? This therefore is the first and main Ground of Conjugal Felicity, That Husbands love their Wives, and note live all hard

NOW I take it for granted, That this Love was begun, and the Flame of it sufficiently kindled before Marriage; so that the Man voluntarily binds himself in the most publick Manner, and most sacred Terms, To leave all other Women for the sake of this: to live with her, love her, comfort her, he-

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nour and maintain her in every Condition and State of Life. The Question is, By what means these good Promises may best be perform'd, and Love continued according to these

Beginnings?

I Answer; Love is undoubtedly maintain'd by the same Respects and Endearments which first gave it Life. If these fail, 'tis as natural for Love to pine and fall into a Confumption; as it is for a Ship to flacken its Course upon the falling of the Wind; or the Fire to decay when it is not supplied with Fuel. One may justly wonder at the high Professions of Kindness Lovers usually make to each other; and the thin Harvest of Performances afterwards; As if the State of Matrimony were another World, and all that enter'd into it. drank of the River Lethe, and forgot whatever they had faid before.

LET but the Husband carry the fame good Looks towards his Wife, and freak to her in the same endearing Language, and be as ready to oblige her in all his Actions, as he was before Marriage, and he will unquestionably maintain the Character of a loving and tender Husband. He will then bear with her Infirmities, kindly accept of all her good Offices, and wifely encourage her in them, by giving her due Praise and Commendations, He will not exact more of her than she is able to perform, nor deny her any reasonable and modest Request, nor be too parsimonious and thrait-handed. He will be far from all Bitters CHAP. II. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 287 ness, and not use any sharp Reproofs, but upon very great and weighty Occasions. The Husband, it must be own'd, hath an Authority over his Wife, which he may exercife by Commands, Reproofs, Instructions, Admonitions, as need shall require. . The Man is the Image and Glory of God: He is the Head of his Wife, and the Governor of his Family, and therefore any Neglect in him is very dishonourable to God, and pernicious to those committed to his Charge, because he hath none in his House who can over-rule him, and correct his Errors. But he must not treat his Wife as his Servant. Her Inferiority is fuch as comes near to an Equality with him, and makes it unreasonable for him to be distantial and lofty. He must remember, that she is his Yoke-Fellow, and by the Laws and Confent of all Countries, the Miftress of the House, the Affairs whereof are under her Direction and Management: In which Province he must support her by his Authority, and protect her against the Infolence of Servants; treating her himself with such Respect, and afferting her Right with fuch Strictness, as may make them stand in Awe of her. This St. Paul might have an Eye to, when he faid, Giving Honour unto the Wife, as unto the weaker Veffel; that the Weakness of her Sex may be let above Contempt, and secured from Injuries by

the Honour and Esteem which her Husband

pays her.

weighty Occations, IT is a great Miltake in Husbands to think their Superiority over their Wives cannot be maintain'd without supercilious Looks and imperious Language. To be obey'd more out of Fear than Love, is the Condition of a Tyrant, and is neither fafe nor pleafant. Much less can their Authority consist with a licentious, profligate Way of Living. A Husband who is addicted to Drunkenness, or any kind of Lewdness or Debauchery, must become odious to his own Wife, as well as to the World, and a teach her an evil Lesson against himself, as one expresses it, by opening her a Door to the like wicked Practices! So likewife a peevish and morose Temper in the Husband, fours the Spirit of the Wife, and makes her difficult and diffasteful in her Conversation, and reduce are desired y

IF therefore the Husband consults his own Ease and Comfort, he will not be too rigid a Censurer of his Wife's Actions, nor apt to entertain Jealousies and Suspicions of her; nor by rash and hasty Expressions provoke and offend her; but with Mildness convince her of an Error, rather intreating than commanding her, covering her Infirmities, and in no Case exposing her to the Contempt and Reproach of the World.

These are short Hints of a Husband's Duty towards his Wife. I will not meddle with the Laws of the Marriage Bed, which will not fail to be observ'd under the Insluence of true Conjugal Affection. Indeed when these are once grosly violated, by the Husband's withdrawing himself from the Bed of his Wife, either out of Aversion to her, or for the criminal Love of some other of her Sex, the Bonds of Marriage are in effect dissolv'd, the Relation is at an End, and the Terms of Husband and Wife become insignificant.



DUTIES

OF

Wives to their Husbands.

HE Covenant which every WIFE voluntarily engages in to her HUSBAND, is, To obey him, ferve him, love, honour, and keep him; and, forfaking all

others, to keep only to him. Now this is not a late Invention of the Church, as some querulous Persons seem to fancy, but it appears that the very End and Design of the Woman's

Woman's Creation, was for the Service of Man. It is not good (faid God) that Man (bould be alone: I will make bim an Help meet for him. And afterwards he declares to the Woman her Condition, in these Words: b Thy Desire (ball be to thy Husband, and he (ball rule over thee. Upon which St. Paul grounds her Subjection. and injoyns her Obedience in feveral Places. particularly, Ephef. v. 22. Wives, Submit your selves unto your own Husbands, as unto the Lord. For the Husband is the Head of the Wife, even as Christ is the Head of the Church. Therefore as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the Wives be to their own Husbands in every thing. I Time ii. 11, 12, 13, 14. Let the Woman learn in Silence with all Subjection. But I fuffer not a Woman to teach, nor to usurp Authority over the Man, but to be in Silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the Woman being deceived, was in the Transgreffion. This Pre-eminence of the Man is requifite by the Laws of Nature, being founded upon that Strength, Sufficiency and Majesty of the one Sex, and the Softness and Weakness of the other.

This being the plain Duty of the Wife, the must have an affectionate Love for, and due Esteem of her Husband, as the Root and Ground of her Submission. No Honour or antecedent Dignity in the Wife, no Superiority of Birth, Education, Fortune, or Parts,

Gen. il. 18. b Gen. ili, 16.

can discharge her from Subjection to her Husband: Whatever Disadvantages may be in his Condition, or Person, whatever his Infirmities (not depriving him of his Reason) or Mistakes and Errors in Religion, there always lies an Obligation upon his Wife, from the Laws of her Creation, from the Ordinance of God, and from her own solemn Vow in Marriage, to

Love, Honour, Obey, and Serve him.

THE Circumstances which must attend the Performance of these Duties, are, Complacency, Chearfulness, Modesty and Humility. The Wife must resolve to be content with her Husband's Fortune; which if it be but narrow, The must be the more frugal in the Management of it; and rather study to increase it by her Diligence, than wafte it by Slothfulness or Luxus ry in Diet or Apparel. Solomon's Character of a good Wife, is, That her Husband's Heart doth fafely trust in her. She will do him good, and not evil, all the Days of her Life. She rifeth while it is yet Night, and giveth Meat to her Housbold, by her well ordering and improving every thing to the best Advantage. She studies not her own Features, so much as the Beauty of her Family; and her greatest Pleasure is, to fee a commendable Provision of all Necessaries in it. Moreover, As her Concerns are altogether at Home, so she will think it a modest and decent Thing to refrain from too frequent Vifits; and then, more especially, when her Husband is absent; rather delighting to imploy her self in the Affairs of her own Family, which is her peculiar Province, than to inter-

fere in those of her Neighbours.

THE Obedience of the Wife is shown in a chearful and ready Complyance with her Husband's Requests; she takes care that whatever he wants, be done for him forthwith in the most kind and obliging manner. If he expresses his Dislike of any thing, she endeavours to rectifie it; If he agrees not to any Undertaking of hers, she easily desists. All this she doth with such agreeable Looks and becoming Language, as makes her Husband easie in his own Mind, honoured by all his Family and Friends about him; and her self esteem'd as an affectionate and prudent Wife, and a great Blessing to her Husband and Children.

For a Woman to think that she lessens her felf by this mild and submissive Carriage, is a most absurd and pernicious Imagination. Whether it be fuggested to her by some false Friends and dissolute Companions, or flow from her own Pride and Self-Conceit, it does her infinite Mischief, making her imperious and perverse, difrespectful and froward to her Husband, whose Affections are thereby alienated from her, and the Family fill'd with Quarrels and Contentions, and all manner of Disorder. Whereas the mild, complying Wife governs while she submits, winning the Heart of her Husband by her gentle and courteous Behaviour, fo that he hath no Power to deny her any reasonable Request. IF

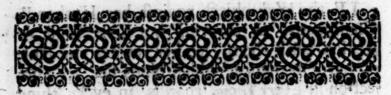
IF the Wife object against her Husband's Commands, as carrying but little Sense or Reason with them, let her review the Rule of her Obedience, which binds her to Subjection in Every Thing, that is, in every thing not contrary to God's Will, who put her in this State of Subjection. The more irrational and arbitrary his Demands are, the greater is the Merit and Praise of her Obedience in complying with them. In the Eastern Countries, where washing the Feet was a servile Office, as we learn from the Gospel, yet the Wife was not exempted from it; we are told that this was reckon'd among the Services due from her to her Husband. And fure the could not think it too mean a Condescension, after our Lord had stooped so low as to wash the Feet of his own Disciples.

AS the Union betwixt Husband and Wife is the strictest that can be, they two being one Flesh, so their Interests, Credit and Reputation, are inseparable: And therefore tis needless to caution the Wife, that she carefully conceal the Infirmities of her Husband; since she cannot expose him to the World, without bringing a Shame and Reproach upon

is, that in Cafe the Mother be incapable of nurfing her own Children, they provide a

THE URL thing that Parents have to do.

good Nurse; for it is an undoubted Observa-Ara H. Dalants fuck in the Differencers and H. Harnows of unhealthful Nurses.



CHAP. III.

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Parents to their Children.

HERE is nothing in the Decalogue, or Ten Commandments, of any Duty which PARENTS owe to their CHILDREN. Not that there is no fuch thing; but for

Brevity's fake, it is omitted, as being less necessary to be injoyn'd, than that other of Children to Parents. For Parents have the strongest Arguments imaginable, natural Affection, common Prudence, and the Fear of God, to incite them to do all good Offices both to the Souls and Bodies of their Children, who by reason of their tender Years, cannot take care of themselves.

THE first thing that Parents have to do, is, that in Case the Mother be incapable of nursing her own Children, they provide a good Nurse; for it is an undoubted Observation, that Infants fuck in the Diffempers and

ill Humours of unhealthful Nurses.

WHEN

WHEN Children are grown up, it ought to be the ferious Care both of Parents, and of those who, at Baptism, take upon them the Charge and Office of Parents, who have bound themselves by solemn Vows in the Presence of God and his Church, to see that those for whom they are Sureties, be instructed in all those things which a Christian ought to know, and believe for the good of his Soul; that they be brought up to to lead a Godly and Religious Life. Every fuch Person doth, by the very Nature of the Engagement into which he enters, fay unto God, what Judah faid unto Israel his Father, I will be Surety for the Child; of my Hand Shalt thou require him; if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, let me bear the Blame.

Part of their Duty, there are several Injunctions laid on them, tho' not in the Second Table, yet in other Places of Scripture, for the well educating and managing of their Children. The most comprehensive is that of the Apostle, * Fathers, provoke not your Children to Wrath; but bring them up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord. In which Words they are directed with what Temper they ought to manage their Children; and in what

^{*} Ephef. vi. 4.

Things to instruct them: Which two Rules well observed, make up the Character of Good Parents, den malen minore es colw

AS to the Temper of Parents in governing their Children, there are two Extreams which they commonly run into; Severity on the one

hand, and Indulgence on the other.

CHILDREN, 'tis commonly prefum'd, are oftner spoil'd by the Lenity and Fondness of their Parents, than by a harsh and over-rigorous Discipline. With this ill Oeconomy God charges Eli the Prieft, that his Sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them nor. Yet he reproved them with grave and ferious Language, shewing them withal, the Danger of their impious Courses. Nay, my Sons: for it is. no good Report which I hear of you. Te make the Lord's People to transgress. If one Man sin against another, the Judge shall judge him: But if a Man fin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him? This, I am afraid, is more than some Christian Parents do for their Children; yet this did not acquir Eli, because it did not reform his. Sons. They were harden'd Men, vehemently addicted to youthful Lufts, and not to be reclaim'd by the foft Reproofs of a mild, indulgent Father. He should have animadverted. on them with the utmost Indignation and Difpleasure, and have made them smart under; all the Punishments he could inflict, either as

CHAP. III. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 297

a Parent, or High Priest, till he had effectually reform'd them, or remov'd them from their sacred Office. In Cases of Hardness and Obstinacy, Solomon, who perfectly understood the Duty of a Parent, advises to use Severity. Foolishness, says he, is bound in the Heart of a Child; but the Rod of Correction shall drive it far from him. b He that spareth his Rod, hateth his Son: but he that loveth him, chasteneth him betimes. chasten thy Son while there is yet Hope; and let

not thy Soul spare for his Crying.

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NOTWITHSTANDING, Severity is not to be equally exercised upon all forts of Chil-That which will not bend some stubborn Spirits, will too much oppress and crush others of a finer Frame. The Temper and Disposition of the Mind must be studied as carefully as that of the Body, and the Applications of Discipline and Correction, must be like that of Phylick; whereof a Dose but strong enough to carry off the noxious Humours of a robust Constitution, would prey upon the Vitals, and destroy the very Life of a weak one. Some free and ingenuous Natures there are, which never want a Spur, but as foon as they understand what their Parents or Governours require, they readily fet about it, and are never better pleas'd than when they perceive they have fatisfied them. Now fuch Children as these, if they happen to commit an Error, must be kindly and gently admonished of it, and fet right again.

Prov. Ixii. 15. Prov. xiii. 24. Prov. xix. 18.

TO exclaim at them in great Commotion, and terrifie them with passionate Threatnings; to quarrel at them, and reproach them for every Mistake; to be apt to strike them hastily and in Anger; to abound in Punishments, and be very sparing of Rewards: This kind of Nurture would ftrangely discourage Children of a tractable and generous Mind, who fludy nothing fo much as how to recommend themselves to the Favour of their Parents and Masters. This would make them despair of ever being able to please, when they had endeavour'd fo often, and never found Acceptance. It would fully the Brightness, and imbitter the Sweetness of their innocent Souls; it would fill them with Melancholy, make them peevish and ill-humour'd, cast a Damp upon their virtuous Inclinations, cause their Hearts to fwell against their Parents, and provoke them to indecent, undutiful Language. In short, the unreasonable Harshness and Rigor of Parents, creates in their tender Children an Aversion to those good Things which they labour to instill into them, when they find that the Learning of them is made fuch a bitter Task, and intolerable Drudgery.

This then I conceive to be the Sum of the Parents Duty with reference to the Nurture and Usage of their Children. As you must not fuffer any Sin or ill Manners to grow up with them, for want of sufficient and seasonable Corrections; so take care to make your felves

felves in the general, easie and agreeable to your Children. Don't carry it towards them with that habitual Spleen and Bitterness, as if you hated them, and esteem'd them your greatest Burdens and Grievances; for that is the way to make their Spirits rife against you, and to render their Behaviour towards you less reverent and endearing, than what you expect and wish to see in them. Don't teach them even good Things with too much Acrimony and Violence; for that is the way to turn their Minds against them, to be very uneasie at the mentioning of them, and to dread the Times when they are usually call'd to an Account about them. Don't be too apt to teaze them with the ungrateful Remembrance of their past Faults, or to strike them with furprizing Vehemency and Wrath upon the immediate Commission of any wrong Thing; or to bind heavy Tasks and Burdens upon them, and rarely encourage them with pleafing Looks, or kind Words and fuitable Rewards. But let your Treatment of them be fuch as may preserve and improve their good Temper, render your Commands delightful to them, and fully convince them that all the Restraints you lay upon them, and Tasks you injoyn them, are indispensably necessary for their Good, and that you do in all Things earnestly consult the Welfare of their Souls and Bodies.

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HAVING thus far consider'd the Conduct and Temper to be used in the Education of Children, let us next take a short View of the Things most necessary for them to be Instructed in.

THE first Thing Children should be taught, is the Knowledge of God; and that Knowledge is most easily insused into them by the Reading and Hearing of the Holy Scriptures. For no Books are more intelligible than the Practical Parts of these Sacred Writings; and no Histories more admirable and delightful. It is the Advice of a judicious and learned Father (and Reason subscribes to the Goodness of it) that young Children should be acquainted with these Divine Precepts and Histories, before prophane Tales and Fables are put into their Hands, and imprinted on their tender Minds.

2. LET Children be constantly instructed in that judicious, found, and truly Christian Catechism, which the Church hath provided for them. This is Milk for Babes, even the fincere Milk of God's Word. Here they are fure to meet with the great Fundamentals of Christianity, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Commandments, and the Doctrine of the Two Sacraments, explain'd without multitude of Words to burden the Memory, or Nicety of Sense to perplex weak Understandings; but with fuch Brevity and Clearness, as may form in young Children a found Faith and religious Disposition, and confirm them in the fame, when they grow up to riper Years. 3. TO

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3. TO this constant Method of Catechizing, let other Opportunities be added of instilling Piety into Childrens Minds. Let the great and wonderful Works of God be often inculcated upon them; especially such remarkable Instances of Divine Providence, as happen in their own Time. When there are Wars, Famines, Conflagrations, or any grievous Mortality, let Children be told, That these are the Rods and Scourges with which God chastises the Sins of Men. On the other hand, when Health, Peace and Plenty are restored, or any other signal Blessing is granted, let them be taught to acknowledge God the Author and Giver of all good Things, and to render him Thanks and praise for the same.

4. IT is the Duty of Parents to train up their Children in the Worship of God, both publick and private. To keep them to their Prayers Morning and Evening, and to other Acts of Family Devotion. To fee they pay a due Attention to the Service of the Church; for which purpose they should instruct them, as foon as they are capable of Learning, how to use the Service-Book, and be ready to turn to the feveral Parts of it; directing them likewise how to behave themselves, when to stand, when to kneel, and how to go through the whole Office in the most devout and reverent Manner. In speaking of Sacred Things, they should accustom them to great Seriousness; as, not to mention the Name of God, or recite any Passage of Holy Scripture,

but upon a grave Occasion; never to utter any Curses or Imprecations; to treat all Things relating to Religion with a particular Vener ration.

PARENTS ought to take more Care to get a Portion for their Childrens Souls in Heaven, than to make Provision for their Bodies on Earth. If, as St. Paul says, a Man does not provide Bodily Sustenance for his own, or for those of his House, he be worse than an Insidel, how much worse than an Insidel, how much worse than an Insidel must he be, that does not relieve their Spiritual Wants, and suffers his Family to neglect the Salvation of their Souls?

DO but observe how many Disobedient Children are the Sorrow of their Parents: which might generally be prevented, if their Tender Years were well season'd by Early Insusans of Piety and Virtue. This is the best Method you can take to secure the Obedience and Tractableness of your Children; for not-withstanding the Obligations of Nature, the Duties of mutual Relation stand most firm on

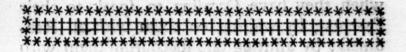
the Principles of Religion.

LASTLY, Parents must educate their Children in the Duties of Civil Life; disposing them to all the good Offices of Justice, Humanity, and Mercy. They must breed them up to some honest Imployment, and fortiste their Minds against Lying, Cheating, and all kinds of fraudulent Dealing, by shewing them how base, dangerous, and displeasing to God such wicked Practices are. They must warn them

them against the Infection of ill Company, and the destructive Ways of Intemperance, Uncleanness, and all irregular and lawless Living, by declaring to them the Curfes and Judgments which God hath threatned to fuch Children, and letting them fee to what shameful Ends others who have follow'd such Courses, have brought themselves at last. They must accustom them to govern their Tongues, so as to speak Evil of no Man, to refrain from Backbiting and Slandering, and from fuch provoking and fcurrilous Language, as begets Quarrels and Contentions. In short, to observe all those Rules of Civility and Honesty, whereby Love and Peace are maintain'd, and every Man fecured in the Privileges and Respects due to him. If Parents don't take Care thus to regulate the Affections of their Children, their vitious Desires and Propensions will grow from a small Degree, to the greatest Extream: As for Instance, Courage soon grows into Anger, and then Rage; Frugality makes an easie Progress to Covetousness, and finally centers in Miserableness, and that Want which it would avoid: There is a ready Transition from Benevolence and Generolity, to Profuseness and Extravagance; from Religion not built upon found Principles, to Superstition and Enthusiasm: from Rational Hope, to Confidence, Pride, Conceit, Vain-glory, and Prefumption; &c. We should therefore cultivate their Natures, and make found Principles the Rule and Measure of all their Actions. For by X 4 letting letting the Reins of Government hang loofe, Children will abandon themselves to the Sway of those Passions, which they are most inclined to follow.

THIS is the Substance of that Care which Parents, or those who are in the Room of Parents, are obliged to take of young Children. In discharging these Duties, they may justly hope, not only to reap the Comfort of their Childrens Obedience, and filial Affection and Affistance in any Wants, but likewife to fill the Church with good Members, the State with good Subjects, and all Societies and Professions with good Masters and Servants. Hereby a Stop would be put to that Deluge of Profaneness and Irreligion amongst us, which is very much owing to the ill Government of particular Families. For 'tis in vain to hope for Reformation of Manners, while Domestick Discipline is so much out of Order. Magistrates and Ministers, notwithstanding their Diligence in their respective Offices, can only lop the Branches of spreading Vice: It is the Business of Parents and Heads of Families, to pluck it up by the Roots, and put an End to it. And fince their own Examples are not always the best Directions, they ought to be the more diligent in laying down good Rules, and feeing them duly observ'd in their Houses. This would in some measure atone for their own Personal Failings, and enable them to give a good Account both to God and the World, of the Persons committed to their Charge,

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Children to their Parents.

N the Front of the Second Table, which contains our Duties towards our Neighbour, that Command is very properly placed, which obliges CHILDREN to

honour their PARENTS. Now Honour is a Word of a very extensive Signification, comprehending all those particular Acts of Duty, that Fear and Reverence, that Gratitude and Affiftance, that gentle and tractable Spirit. which are most necessary to the Support of Authority and good Government. As to the outward Expressions of this Honour, they must be determin'd by the Fashion and Custom of particular Countries. As among us, Childrens Honour and Duty to their Parents, is expressed by Standing in their Presence, uncovering their Heads, craving their Bleffing upon their Knees; and, in general, by keeping Silence when their Parents fpeak to them; by using Terms of Respect and Deserence when they have Occasion to speak to their Parents; by waiting on them with all Readiness; by affifting and fuccouring them with all Chearfulness, whenever they please to require, or do really stand in need of the Service and good Offices of their Children. Thing I may add, because it is a Fault to which Children are too prone, as thinking it to be no Sin; and that is, They are not to defraud their Parents, or take any thing without their express Leave; the Censure which Solomon hath pass'd upon such a Practice, is enough, one would think, to deter them from it: Whofo robbeth his Father or his Mother, and faith, It is no Transgression, the same is the Companion of a Destroyer.

IN this Latitude is Filial Honour and Obedience explain'd by the Sacred Writers: By Moses, b Te shall fear every Man his Father and his Mother. By Solamon, My Son, hear the Instruction of thy Father, and forfake not the Law of thy Mother. By the Son of Sirach, & Honour thy Father and Mother both in Word and Deed. - Help thy Father in his Age, and grieve him not as long as he liveth. And if his Understanding fail, have Patience with him, and despise him not when thou art in thy full Strength. St. Paul, Let Children learn to Shew Piety at

Prov. xxviii. 24. Lev. ix. 3. Prov. i. 8. d Eccluf. iii. c 1 Tim. v. 4.

home, and requite their Parents, or render them fuitable Returns. With many more Passages to the like purpose.

THE Arguments from Nature and Reason which inforce this Duty, are many and ob-

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T. FROM Parents it is that Children derive that Life and Being, which is the Foundation of all the Comforts, Pleasures, and Happiness

they are capable of enjoying.

- 2. TO their Parents they owe their Prefervation, Maintenance and Protection in their most helpless State. There is no fort of living Creatures so naked and destitute, and so long before they come to help themselves, as we are; as if God had thus order'd it on purpose to beget Endearments between us and our Parents, that we should long require their Care and Tenderness towards us.
- 3. Besides the Daily Cares and Fears for Children in nursing them, and bringing them up, Parents are commonly at great Expences with them (and such as they cannot always bear without Inconvenience to themselves) to provide Means for their future Subsistence throughout the whole Course of their Lives.
- 4. CHILDREN do not only partake with their Parents in all the Comforts of their Fortune, and Ornaments of their Condition; but they often receive from them Provisions for their

their whole Name and Posterity: the Wealth which Parents have acquired, usually devolving upon their Children, and Childrens Chil-Arguments from Nature and Resign

TO this we may add. That not only our Temporal, but Eternal Welfare too, depends much upon the Care and good Instructions of our Parents. If we are brought up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord, if we are fet right in the Way to Everlasting Happiness, 'tis generally owing to their pious Ex-

ample or Discipline : Some society mousevier

FROM all this we may learn the Reasonableness of the Duty here injoyn'd, and what ftrong Obligations are upon Children to render to their Parents all Love, Respect, and Obfervance in Word and Deed. This all civiliz'd Nations have been perfuaded of, and by the Light of Nature and Reason concluded, That as Parents have the Compassion most resembling that of God towards their Children, as they are the principal Instruments by which God's Bleffings are conferr'd upon them; fo they should be esteem'd as God's Representatives, and as his most lively Images have a special Veneration paid to them. 19 4 shive of

THE Reward and Bleffing annex'd to the pious Discharge of this Duty, is Length of Days, and confequently Health and Strength. Peace and Quietness, with a competent Supply of Food and Rayment, and all Things needful:

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and convenient for us; for otherwise long Life would not be a Bleffing, but a Burden and

a Punishment.

IT deserves to be taken Notice of, That there is a great Congruity between the Duty injoyn'd, and the Reward propounded; that it is very fit those who are grateful to the Authors (under God) of their Life and Being, should enjoy that Life and Being, long and well; that those who love, honour, and fuccour their Parents, should have Joy, Honour, and Comfort of their own Children; that those who have been accustom'd to Acts of Obedience and Courtesie at home, should have a happy Genius in pleasing others, and by that means, win the Love and Effeem, the good Wishes and Suffrages of all the best Part of Mankind; and so have un-envied Favours and Preferments conferr'd upon them. Of this we have many Examples in all kinds of History, particularly in the Accounts which Holy Scripture gives of fuch good Men.

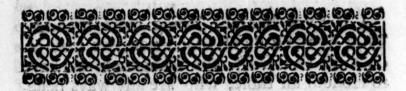
ON the contrary, the Neglect and Contempt of our Parents, hath always been reputed, next to Atheism and Blasphemy against God, the most heinous Sin that Children can be guilty of. And God, who hath promised his Blessing to obedient Children, hath denounced a terrible Curse to the Disobedient. *Cursed be he that setteth light by his Father or

claimed upon Mount Ebal, and to which all the People were to fay Amen. And the fame is folemnly published in our Churches once a Year, and is the Second in the Catalogue of most heinous Offenders, to shew in what Company God and Man have thought sit to place such Children.

Bur besides this Threatning of a Curse, the Divine Law affign'd a particular Punishment to be inflicted upon stybborn, rebellious Children; a Punishment no less than Death, and that Death of the most ignominious kind, as being executed upon Idolaters and Blasphemers, Death by stoning. This Law we have at large, Deut. xxi. 18, &c. If a Man have a stubborn and rebellious Son, which will not obey the Voice of his Father, or the Voice of his Mother, and that when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them: Then shall his Father and his Mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the Elders of his City, and unto the Gate of his Place: And they shall say unto the Elders of his City; This our Son is Stubborn and Rebellious; he will not obey our Voice; he is a Glutton and a Drunkard. And all the Men of his City [ball stone him with Stones, that he die : so shalt thou put Evil away from among you; and all Ifrael (ball hear and fear.

I HAVE but one Thing more to add; That by the Rule of Proportion, we may reduce to this Duty, the Obligation we have to Honour all those, who are any ways beneficial to us, and do us as kind Offices as our Natural Parents. Such are they who relieve. protect, or defend us; they who provide for our Education or Subfiftence by any honest Imployment; they who watch over us for the Safety of our Souls or Bodies: Such are Magistrates and Governors in Church and State: our Benefactors and Patrons; our School-masters and Tutors; our special Friends and faithful Counsellors. All these doing us the Offices of Parents in some Respects, are so far intitled to our Filial Reverence and Observance.





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Masters to Servants.



OD, the Supream LORD of the whole Earth, hath made one Man to differ from another in Quality and Condition: He hath affign'd to every Man a certain

Place and Station in the World, and limited him by certain Rules, how to comport with others that are above or below him, or upon the Level with himself: for which see particularly Ephes. vi. And He hath appointed a Day wherein He will convene all Mankind before His Tribunal, and as their Great Master, reckon with them for what they have done, and reward or punish them according to their Demerits, without any Respect of Persons. From whence it is evident,

I, THAT

1. THAT the Distinction of Masters and Servants is only temporary, a Matter of meer Oeconomy, for the better ordering the Affairs of this Life; but wholly ceases at Death, and

extends not to a future State.

2. THAT with Respect to God the supream Governor, Masters are only Stewards in his House, set over the rest of his Family to provide for them, and keep them in good Order, and fee that they do the Will of their Master in Heaven; being accountable to him for their Stewardship and Carriage toward fuch as are under them.

THIS Confideration was in ancient Times a great Motive to Masters to treat their Servants with Clemency and Humanity, as we learn from the Profession of Fob to this Purpose: If I, says he, despised the Cause of my Man-Servant, or of my Maid-Servant, when they contended with me; what then shall I do when God rifeth up: and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? Did not he that made me in the Womb, make him? and did not One fashion us in the Womb?

IF Masters did but lay this Consideration to heart, That however in Regard of outward Government, there is a Difference between them and their Servants, yet, under God, they are all as Fellow-Servants, being all fubject to him, and bound by him in mutual Duties one to another; this would effectually restrain them from all Acts of Inhumanity and Infolence, from all Injustice and Oppression; and

^{*} fob xxxi. 13.

mightily incline them to Patience and Tenderness, and not so much to gratifie their own Humours and Passions, as to consult the Glory of their Master in Heaven, and see that his Will

be done throughout their whole Family.

IN the first Place, therefore, Masters who would have good Servants, must endeavour to be good Men themselves, and set good Examples by a religious and virtuous Conversation; particularly by praying Morning and Evening in their Families, and reading good Books at all proper Seafons. It is not for him to command others, who hath no command over himself. Governours may then with a good Grace correct Vice in others, when they permit it not in themselves; but how shall a Man punish the Sins which he commits? Quid verba audio, facta cum videam? It behoveth that the Rule be streight and orderly, if you intend to bring Things to a Rectitude. Men fpeak by their Actions, as well as by their Words; and their Practice hath a greater Influence upon others, than their Precepts. If the Behaviour of Masters before their Servants, Be light and vain; if they betray their Infirmities; if they are given to drinking, fwearing, gaming, lewd Company, or other Vices; if they are too remiss and negligent, either in the Duties of Religion, or the Affairs of their Calling; if they fpend too much Time in Sleep and Diversions: In short, if they make their Servants Accomplices with them in any unlawful Thing; t will be very contradictory for them to complain

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plain of fuch Faults, or hope to redrefs them by any Reproofs or Correction. By the Master's effectual Influence upon Servants it will come topass, that their Actions will be interpreted his, it being plain, that all who fet ill Examples, are answerable, not only for their own Personal Sins, butalfo for those Sins, which others commit by their Pattern. The evil Actions and Enormities of others shall be attributed to him, if he made them bad by his Example: This must needs lye very heavy on his Mind. On the other hand, their good Deeds will be imputed to him, because they were the Effect of his Authority. And how joyful a Reflection must this needs be, that the virtuous Acts of fo many Persons are esteem'd his own? It clearly follows then, That those who prefide over others, are greatly concern'd to look to their own Lives.

A S Masters must not infect their Servants by their own ill Example, so neither must they suffer them to be infected by the wicked Conversation of others. To this end, they must endeavour to keep them from falling into Loose Company, and contracting vitious Acquaintance when they go abroad, especially on the Lord's-Day; a Day appointed by God for the Good of the Soul; but very often abused by improvident Servants, to the Ruin of their Souls and Bodies. 'Tis the Master's Duty then, to see them attend on the Service of the Church as diligently, as they do on his Business in the Week-Days. They may perhaps

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grudge at this strict Order for the present; but the Time will come, when they will be very thankful to you for fuch Confinement; in the mean time, God will bless you in them, by giving them Grace to ferve you diligently and faithfully; which you can never expect, if you don't take care to make them his Servants in the first Place.

AND that you may keep them to the Obfervance of good Rules, you must take care to maintain your Authority over them, by demeaning your felf with the Dignity and Awe of a Master, by keeping your Servants at a reasonable Distance, commanding them nothing but what is just and honest; and strictly exacting the Performance of fuch Commands.

This may be done without excessive Rigor and Austerity. St. Paul advises Masters to forbear Threatning; by which he doth not mean that they should never bend their Brows, nor menace refractory Servants with Punishment; for Impunity is the Mother of Licentiousness, and hardens wicked Persons in their Crimes: But he forbids them to be fo four and morofe in their Looks, fo froward and perverse with their Tongues, that their Servants cannot tell what they mean, nor know what will please them. Or by forbearing threatning, Masters are to understand, that when they have threaten'd Servants for their Faults, they should not be over-hasty in their Punishment, but wait with some Patience for their

their Amendment, after the Example of their Heavenly Master, who tho' he threatens Sinners, yet he is patient, long-suffering, slow to Anger, and delights more in remitting, than

executing Judgments.

This condemns their Practice, who fall upon their Servants with vehement Rage and Fury, as if their Life and Limbs were of no more Value than the Brutes. God foresaw that some Masters would be thus unmerciful in their Corrections; and therefore he made a Law to regulate the Number of Stripes that were to be inflicted on offending Servants.

However, there can be no doubt but Correction must be used sometimes, and so far proportion'd to the Greatness and Aggravations of the Fault, as to make the Offender fensible of it, and careful to avoid it for the future. Both Reason and Scripture require, that the Servant who knew his Lord's Will. and did it not, should be beaten with many Stripes: But that he which knew not, and did commit things worthy of Stripes, should be beaten with few Stripes. There is a Servant, of whom Solomon observes, that he will not be corrected by Words, but is prefumptuous and felf-willed. And there is another, of an ingenuous, modest, and tractable Disposition, careful in the main to please; who if he happens to make a false Step, he humbly con-

Deut. XXV.

fesses it, and studies by future Diligence to make amends for it. Now a Master would ill acquit himself, if he should not make a great Difference between these two: If by Remissness and Indulgence, he should suffer the former to despise his lawful Commands, and trample upon that Authority which God hath given him for the good Government of his Family; or fo harshly punish the Failings and Mistakes of the other, as utterly to discourage him, and make him despair of ever being able to please. A prudent Master should have especial Care, to shun that Austerity and Rigor which discourages his Servant's Endeayours, and also that Softness and Indulgence which encourages his Vices.

FOR these Reasons, a wife Master will not be so attentive to the present Advantages he shall receive with his Servant, as the Family he comes out of, and the virtuous Principles and good Temper he is endued with. It is better to use this Precaution in choosing, than to venture in Hopes of Reforming those that are spoil'd to his Hand. They may sooner corrupt his Children, and the rest of his Servants. than change ill Nature, or relinquish their ill Habits and Customs, which are a second Nature, and too hard for the Power of Man to

rectifie.

Bur while Masters inspect the Manners of their Servants, they must not over-look the State of their Bodies. 'Tis their Interest, as well as their Duty, to allow them fuch 20 Bolt

fuch Food and Rayment, and moderate Rest and Refreshment as may preserve their Health, and repair their Vigor and Spirits for undergoing their Business. God hath provided for the merciful Usage of the very Beasts, forbidding to muzzle the Mouth of the Ox that treadeth out the Corn, and ordering, that the labouring Beaft shall rest every seventh Day, as well as his Master. How much is a Man, tho' of the lowest. most servile Condition, better than a Beaft? It is therefore the Will of God, that Servants, who are of the fame Species with their Masters, and differ from them only in Rank and Quality, should enjoy all convenient Accommodations of Diet, Lodging, and Reft from their Labours; especially when they do their Business so well as not to deserve Punishment in any of these Respects, for their Disobedience or groß Negligence. And if they happen to fpend their Health and Strength in the Service of any one Master, it would be very ill in him, when they come to be disabled by Sickness or old Age, to turn them away defitute and helplefs. I edited against bio na

IT is a great Blemish in the Life of Cato the Elder, a Man otherwise of a noble Character, that he would dismiss those who had worn themselves out in his Service, and deny them Victuals when they were past their Labour. Hear what Plutarch, the Writer of his Life, says of this. "Tis unnatural to think, that there ought to be no farther Commerce between Man and Man, but just Y 4 "while

while there arises some Profit therefrom: 'For we see that good Nature hath a larger "Field than bare Justice, to exercise it self "in. Strictly speaking, indeed, we are bound to deal with Men according to Law " and Justice; but we may extend our Good-" ness even to irrational Creatures; and 'tis doubtless the Part of a good natur'd Man " to keep his very Horses, not only while "they are able to work, but when they " are old and past it. The Athenians, when " they made their Hecatompodon, which was a spacious Piece of Ground, turn'd in those Mules to feed, which had undergone the " hardest Labour. We are not to use any " living Creatures like old Potsherds, and " throw them away when they are broken with Service. If it were for nothing elfe but to express the Sense we have of Humainity, a Man ought always to shew himself " tender in these Things. For my Part, I a would not fo much as fell my Draught-Ox on the Account of his Age; much less dismiss " an old Servant for the faving of a little Money, and fend him, as it were, into another world, by turning him both out of the Place and Way of living which he hath been always accustom'd to

FINALLY, those who employ poor People, not only as Domesticks, but Day-Servants and Labourers, must look to it, that they exactinot an unreasonable Task for an inconsiderabil between Man and Man, but just

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fiderable Recompense; nor detain their Wages when it is due; but give them that which is just and equal; as they tender the Favour of Him who is above all, and fees all, who promifes to hear the Cry of the Poor and Needy. and to help them to their Right, that the Man of the Earth be not exalted against them: who threatens to be a fwift Witness against those who oppress them in their Wages; and thus bespeaks Masters in their Behalf; Thou shalt not oppress an hired Servant that is poor and needy; whether he be of thy Brethren, or of thy Strangers that are in thy Land within thy Gates. At his Day thou shalt give him his Hire, neither shall the Sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his Heart upon it; lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be Sin unto thee.

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Servants to Masters.



HE First Thing required of SERVANTS, is Obedience, which is fo effential to their Condition, that when they cast off this, they can be no longer Servants.

This Obedience is either active or passive.

THE active Part of a Servant's Obedience. consists in a due Observance of his Master's Commands and Instructions. This diligent Observance was so much the Practice of Servants in the best of Times, that David alludes to it, as the fittest Comparison to illustrate the Strictness of his Piety and Devotion. Behold, fays he, as the Eyes of Servants look unto the Hand of their Masters, and as the Eyes of a Maiden unto the Hand of her Mistres; even fo our Eyes wait upon the Lord our God, untill he have Mercy upon us. This looking to their

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Hands implies not only a Dependence on them for Succour and Relief, but also a Readiness to hear and execute whatever they would have done. So our great Master Christ hath determin'd, when he a instances in a Servant that had been plowing all Day long; yet when he comes home, his Master doth not bid him straightway sit down and take his Supper; but requires him sirst to make ready for his Master, and wait on him, and afterwards to eat and drink himself: And for this the Servant hath no Thanks; he hath done no more than what was his Duty to do.

IT is likewise one Branch of Servants Duty to joyn with their Masters in the Worship of God, when they have the Happiness to be placed in true Christian Families. This was a great Means of propagating Christianity in the first Beginning of it. When the Master and Mistress embraced the Faith, then presently all that were in the House believed and were baptized. And as Cornelius the Centurion was a devout Man, so the Soldier that waited on him bears the same

Character.

But, 2dly, There is a passive as well as active Obedience required of Servants; and that is, patiently to bear Reproof and Correction when they deserve it; nay, when there is no other Reason for it, but the Choler and hasty Spirit of their Governors. For so St. Peter ex-

^{*} Luke Xvii.

prefly charges them: * Servants, be subject to your Masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thankworthy, if a Man for Conscience toward God endure Grief, suffering wrongfully. For what Glory is it, if when ye be buffeted for your Faults, ye take it patiently? But if when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.

But when they are reproved and corrected for real Faults, they must not only be patient, but speedily reform and amend whatever is amifs. Thus their Sufferings will redound to their Advantage, and, like wholesome Physick, purge out ill Humours. By this Means an ill Servant is many Times rescued from Destruction, and brought to live happily and comfortably all the Days of his Life. In time past, fays St. Paul of Philemon's Servant, he was unprofitable, but now profitable both to thee and me. Old

HAVING thus explain'd the Nature of that Obedience both active and passive, which Servants owe to their Masters, I shall next confider in what Manner and Circumstances this Obedience ought to be testified; or what are the Qualifications of an obedient

THE first Qualification of such a Servant, is Reverence and Modesty, which must be express'd in a submissive Carriage and respectful Language. The Obeisance and Courtesy of Servants must be suited to the Quality of

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Pet. ii. 18.

CHAP. IV. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 325 their Masters. Above all, They must take care to govern their Tongues; not speaking in the Presence of their Masters or Mistresses without good Reason; not answering again when it is not required of them, but filently attending to that which is commanded. When they are to make answer, they must do it readily and clearly, not daring to lye or equivocate, or conceal any part of what is demanded of them. In converting with others, they must not expose the Persons, or divulge the Affairs of the Family in which they live, but cover and excuse every Thing which may be apt to lessen them in their Persons, Fortunes, Understandings and Passions.

THE fecond Qualification of good Servants, is, Sincerity and Faithfulness in their Master's Business; preserving his Goods, and studying by all honest Means to improve and increase them. I may, not improperly, apply that Charge to Servants, which St. Paul gives to Timothy: Keep that which is committed to thy Trust. Servants must take care, that the Things with which they are entrusted, be not lost, spoil'd, or impair'd by misusing. And if they know of any Damage done, or intended to be done, by others to their Master's Goods, they must endeavour to prevent it, or acquaint their Master with it, that he may provide against it.

MASTERS and Mistresses are forced in many Things, to depend upon the Integrity and Industry of their Servants; who if they are sincere and honest, will not deceive

them;

them; but apply as heartily to their Business, disparch it with as much Speed, and be as follicitous for the Interest and Welfare of their Master, as if his Eyes were actually upon them.

FAITHFUL Servants will moreover be ready to do all kind Offices to all Persons in the Family to which they belong. They will, to the utmost of their Power, promote Peace and Love, and both by Advice and Example, encourage their Fellow-Servants to virtuous Courfes, and disfuade them from lewd and vitious Practices.

AND because Children, which are most dear to their Parents, must needs be often in the Company of Servants; therefore honest Servants will be particularly careful to preferve them from Danger, and keep them from the Company of rude Children. And will be fo far from teaching them any ill Words, or encouraging them in any indecent Thing, that they will unteach them fuch Things, if they find they have learnt them, and endeavour to form them to Modesty and good Manners in all their Words and Actions.

A THIRD Qualification of good Servants, is Chearfulness in doing their Business. When St. Paul commands them to serve with a good Will, he doth, by a necessary Consequence, forbid them to be lazy, fluggish, and negligent in their Service; or to put on lowring, melancholy Looks, to be heavy and discontented,

CHAP. IV. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 327 to go about Things grudgingly, and as it were by Compulsion. Such Service must needs be untowardly perform'd; or if outwardly well done, yet the Doer of it can have little Comfort, and as little Acceptance either with Gop or Man.

LASTLY, A Fourth Qualification of a good Servant, is a good Sense of Religion and the Fear of God. This though last in the Order of Place, is first in the Course of Things, being the Basis on which all the other good Properties are founded. There are indeed some Servants, who out of By-respects may serve well in many Things, but never in all. They will never keep constant to all the Rules of Sobriety and Virtue, They will one way or other give a Loofe to their corrupt Affections. If the Ends for which they flatter, and study to please, are not answer'd, if they do not find as much Favour and Advantage as they promised themselves, their Industry flags, and their Obsequiousness turns to the greatest Prefumption. Whereas a Servant who truly fears God, will be fure to do his Business faithfully, not only when his Mafter smiles and rewards. not only when he frowns and threatens, but at all other Times, when he feems to take no Notice of him. For when there is no other Motive to animate him to his Duty, his Conscience, Fear, and Sense of the All-seeing God, is instead of a thousand Motives and Spurs to him.

him. He is fully perswaded, That while he is faithful to his Earthly Master, however he may accept and reward him, the Great Mafter of the Universe is pleased with him, and will not fuffer him to lofe his Reward. This is the plain Doctrine of St. Paul, with which I shall conclude this Head: 2 Servants, be obedient to them that are your Masters according to the Flesh, wich Fear and Trembling, in Singleness of your Heart, as unto Christ: Not with Eye-service. as Men-pleasers, but as the Servants of Christ, doing the Will of God from the Heart. With good Will doing Service, as to the Lord, and not to Men. Knowing that what soever good Thing any Man doth. the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. he at sometimes cook goven flow

Ephes. vi. 5



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Our CALLINGS.

NE of the Three Things which wife CATO repented of, was, That ever he had spent a Day idly, without doing fomething to good Purpofe. I am afraid

many Christians will have Days, and Weeks, and Tears of milbent Time to account for at the Last Day. How unprofitably doth a great Part of Mankind suffer their Life to run out. as if their Soul was given them for no other Use, but (like Salt) to keep their Body from

putrifying above Ground.

THE Nature of our BUSINESS is Twofold, Religious and Civil, for this Life, and a Better. We must feek the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness, in the first Place; but this doth not exclude the Care of our Bodies. Six Days in Seven are by the Divine Law allow'd for our Worldly Affairs. And though we must in all our Actions have an Eye to the Glory of God, yet this is no where said to be inconfistent with an honest secular

Twill of

Imployment. Our Condition in this Life is fuch. that we cannot subsist without Food and Rayment, which cannot be had without much Pains, and the Exercise of many Arts. The Knowledge of the Liberal Sciences, the Laws of our Country, the learned Languages, are not born with us, nor supernaturally infused into us; but acquired with much Study and Application of Thought. Now whether we labour with the Head or the Hand, in both Cases 'tis our Duty to be diligent. So Solomon commands; What seever thine Hand findeth thee to do, do it with all thy might. And fo St. Paul. Be not flothful in Business. Indeed, we have innumerable Examples of Industry about us: The whole Creation is in continual Action > the Sun, Moon, and Stars are always running. their Courses; the Seasons of the Year perform their incessant Revolutions; the Birds. Beafts, and Fishes, seek their Food, and serve the respective Ends of their Nature with unwearied Assiduity. All Things are full of The Great Author of all Things Labour. never flumbereth nor fleepeth. And his only Begotten Son, when made Man, led a very laborious and active Life upon Earth; and hath arraign'd and condemn'd Slothfulness in the Person of the unprofitable Servant.

THE Bleffing and Favour of God and Man is affur'd to the Industrious by repeated Promises of Holy Scripture: The Hand of the Diligent maketh rich. He that tilleth his Land, Seeft thou a Man diligent

CHAP. IV. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 331

diligent in his Business? He shall stand before Kings, he shall not stand before mean Men. The Hand of the Diligent shall bear Rule; but the Slothful shall be under Tribute. This is commonly seen in the World. Many a Person of mean Birth and Fortune, hath been rais'd to great Riches and Honours by no other visible Means but his own indefatigable Application to his Business.

ON the other hand, Idleness is doom'd to Ignominy and Want in the same Sacred Writings. Dromsiness shall cloath a Man with Rags. Tet a little Sleep, a little Slumber, a little folding of the Hands to sleep. So shall thy Poverty come as one that travaileth, and thy Want as an armed Man. And this likewise is confirmed by com-

mon Experience:

IF an idle negligent Man be placed by his Friends in the most advantageous Business, or plentiful Circumstances, his Affairs quickly go backward in the World, his Stores are exhausted, his Debts grow upon him, 'till at last he becomes a Bankrupt, or ends his Days in

fome loathfome, obscure Prison.

LEARN then by others Ruin to prevent your own. Consider how much better it is to procure your self Health, and Plenty, and Reputation, with your honest Pains, which a little Custom will make easie and pleasant to you; than to stupishe your Senses, and contract Diseases and Debts, and keep your self and your Family in a beggarly, starving Condition, by abandoning your self to a sottish, Z 2

diffolute, indolent Course of Life. Shake off that Spirit of Slumber which would arrest you, and make you a Prisoner to your Bed in the most precious Part of the Day, the Morning. Wean your felf from an ill Habit of rambling abroad, and getting out of the Sight of your Bufines. Confine your felf to it, though it may feem irksome, 'till you find the Advantage of it, and that will not fail to reconcile you to it, and make you case and der State of the Water of the Camb

happy in it.

SOME indeed there are, who running into the other Extream, are over-follicitous for the World. This we daily fee in the Covetous Man's Practice: He is fo eager in the Gaining of Riches, that he hath no Time or Care to perform his Duty to God. Nor doth he only offend against his Soul, but his Body too; for he often denies himself those necessary Refreshments he wants. Besides. he that loves Money immoderately, will not care whom he cheats and defrauds, fo he may bring in Gain to himself: And from hence fpring those many Tricks of Deceit and Cozenage fo common in the World; taking Advantage of the Buyer's Ignorance in the Worth or Quality of the Goods, concealing their Faults, over-rating them, and giving thort Meafures of the make most of the

Some again, make the very Necessities of the Oppressed, the Means of their Oppression: Thus it is in the Cafe of Extortion and griping Utury. Extream Want of Money gives diffolule OpportuLove of the World, is inconfistent either with

the Love of Gop or our Selves.

DO Business then, but be not a Slave to it: Keep your Mind always at its own Disposal; remembring your main Concern, whatever Constraint your Business may lay upon your Actions and outward Attendance. And whenever you are intangled in Difficulties, rely not upon Humane Prudence; but go with Moses into the Tabernacle, to ask Counsel of God. The Time is short; it remaines the therefore, that they who buy, be as though they possessed not: and they who use this World, as not abusing it: for the Fashion of this World passeth away.

* 1 Cer. vii. 29.

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GHAP.



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FRIENDSHIP and HUMANITY.

of the World, if inconfillent either with

HE Definition which some give of FRIENDSHIP, is, That it is a Union of Souls; and so much indeed the Scripture speaks of it;
Thy Friend, which is as thine own

Soul : intimating, That a higher Degree of Love may be contracted by FRIENDSHIP, than by any kind of Natural or Civil Relation as of solo

THE Laws of his Religion oblige every Christian to love all his Neighbours as Himfelf: But there is between FRIENDS a mutual Confidence and Readiness to affift each other. There is a very high and hearty Concern for each other's Welfare, both of Soul and Body. And therefore 'tis well observed by the Writers upon this Subject, That there can be no such Thing as Friendship between wicked Men, because they are so far from consulting each other's Good, that they draw one another into destructive and damnable Courses. Upon this Principle Principle I conclude, That I must not yield to do any thing for my Friend, which is contrary to any Religious or Moral Obligation. I may give him any thing of my own, but I must not wrong or rob another to serve him. I may run the Hazard of my Life and Estate for him in a just Cause; but I must not set my Soul and Conscience to Sale for his sake. In doing this, I should forfeit the Love and Favour of God, and break through the Rules of Justice and Honesty. This is not Friendship, but a Conspiracy against God and Man, a joyning of Hands, and uniting of Forces to do the more Mischief.

But in True and Virtuous Friendship, we are bound to do all kind Offices for our Friend, to give him the best Advice we can in any difficult Cases, to support and comfort him under any Affliction, to defend his Person and Goods from Violence, and his Character from causless Aspersions, and faithfully to keep such Secrets as he shall have Occasion to commu-

nicate to us.

AND above all, We must be Religious Guardians of our Friend's Virtue, and not suffer him to fall into any Sin, if we can prevent it; nor to continue in any without Friendly Admonitions, and Endeavours to reclaim him. These Admonitions must not extend only to grosser Faults, which common Fame and People at a Distance must take Notice of; but also to more inward Failings and Infirmities; nay, even to Suspicions and doubtful Actions.

To

To preserve the Person we admit to a near Intimacy and Confidence with us, only from being scandalous, is as poor a Design in Friendship, as it is in Physick, for a Professor of it only to secure his Patient from the Plague. Neither must our Care stop at his Faults, but look beyond them, to such virtuous and good Qualities in him, as may be improved and rendered more persect.

LASTLY, We must be Constant in our Friendship, continuing to treat our Friend with the same free and kind Conversation in the Day of his Adversity, as in the Height of his Prosperity; as also not being subject to Misapprehensions or apt to be disobliged by any Mistakes or Inadvertencies we may observe in

him.

Univerfal Love and CHARITY.

derness and Good Will for every ONE of our own NATURE and SPECIES; but yet proportion'd to the several Degrees of Relation we bear one to another: Whether that Relation be founded in Blood, or Affinity, in old Acquaintance and Hospitality, or in being Fellow-Citizens, and of the same Country. All these are Grounds of more particular Love and Affection.

But in the main, we are obliged to imitate the Divine Bounty and Goodness by a Universal Love and Charity to all Mankind. God hath fo order'd the present State and Circumstances of Things, as to make Society necessary for the Support and Comfort of Life. He hath interwoven the Interest of Men, and made the Happiness of every particular Person depend upon the Welfare of the Publick; that each particular Person, from a Sense of his own Wants, might see how reasonable it is for him to be aiding and affisting to others. Just as it is in the Natural Body of Man; If one Member rejoyce, all the rest rejoyce with it; if one suffer, all the rest suffer with it. And as in the Body, the inferior and less honourable Members have their necessary Use, so it is in Society. The poor labouring People exercise those Trades which supply their Superiors with necessary Things, and give them Leisure to attend on learned Professions and Affairs of State. Nav. even those Persons which seem to be useless in the World, fuch as together with their Poverty are disabled by Age or Infirmities, and wholly to be maintain'd at the Charge of others, yet they give us an Opportunity of exercifing those Divine Graces of Charity and Mercy, which make us most nearly to refemble our Heavenly Father. This is the way which he hath found out for us to express our Love and Gratitude to himself. Our Goodness extends to God no otherwise, but as we exhiway with the

bit it to those whom he hath created in his Image. For no Man hath seen God at any Time; but if we love one another, we know that God dwelleth in us, and that his Love is perfected in us. So likewise our Bleffed Saviour accepts of our Kindness to his poor Servants, as the best way of testifying our Love to Himself. Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it to these my Brethren, ye have done it to Me.

This Beneficent Temper endears us to Men as well as to God. The World is wife enough to know their Benefactors, and to prefer Mercy and Peace before a Spirit of Outrage and Fierceness. And we commonly see those Promises fulfilled, That merciful Men obtain Mercy; and, That the Meek inherit the Earth. BY the Tyes of common Humanity, as

we are Men, and Partakers of the same common Nature, we are obliged to Love, and to do Good to one another: But in how much more peculiar and eminent a Manner, ought we to look upon our felves as Brethren by our Christian Profession; being all the Children of God in Christ, all Members of the same Body, all Partakers of the same Spirit, all Heirs of the same Blessed Hope of Immortality? There is one Body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one Hope of your Calling; One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, One God and Father of All. Wherefore, I beseech you, saith the Apostle b, that ye walk worthy of the Vocation

⁹ Ephef. iv. 4. b Ephef. iv. I.

wherewith ye are called, with all Lowlines and Meekneß, with Long-suffering, forbearing one another in Love, endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace. For, Though I freak with the Tongues of Men and Angels, and have not Charity, I am become as sounding Bras, or a tinkling Cymbal. And though I have the Gift of Prophecy, and understand all Mysteries, and all Knowledge, and though I have all Faith, so that I could remove Mountains, and have no Charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my Goods to feed the Poor, and though I give my Body to be burnt, and have not Charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity Suffereth long, and is kind; Charity envieth not; Charity vaunteth not it self, is not puffed up, doth not behave it self unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no Evil, re-Joyceth not in Iniquity, but rejoyceth in the Truth; beareth all Things, believeth all Things, hopeth all Things, indureth all Things.

HAVING therefore all the Encouragements which Heaven and Earth, God and Man can give us, to abound in Love one towards another. let us exercise this most agreeable and noble Virtue, the Bond of all other Virtues, and Sum of the whole Law, the best covering for our Sins, and most acceptable Sacrifice to God. Let all Bitterneß, Wrath, Anger, Clamour, and Evil-speaking be put away from us, with all Malice: And let us be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as we trust God for Christ's

Take will forgive us.

b Ephef. iv. 31, I Cor. xiii.

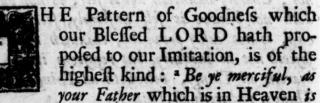


CHAP. VI

OF

CHARITY, es es con para A N D

ALMS-GIVING:



merciful. Now the Mercy of God is over all his Works; He hath a Tenderness for every Creature. It follows then, That our CHARITY must, according to our Ability, extend it self to every Person who stands in need of Relief and Affistance, when we have no just Reason to suspect that he will make an ill Use of it. This distinguishes us from the Scribes and Pharifees, who faluted none but their Brethren, and lent with an Expectation to receive it again with AdvanCHAP. VI. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 341

tage. But Christ hath given us quite contrary Rules, commanding us to do Good to those that hate us, and to lend where we can hope to receive nothing again. And St. Paul exhorts to the same universal Beneficence: As we have Opportunity, let us do Good unto all Men. From the Premises, we may draw these Two Conclusions.

FIRST, That the Objects of our Charity, are the whole Body of Mankind.

SECONDLY, That the Exercise of it must be regulated by our Abilities, and according as we have Opportunity.

A S to the Objects of our CHARITY, our Saviour hath told us, The Poor ye have always with you, and when ye will, ye may do them good; and we daily experience the Truth of this Saying. Many, together with their Poverty, are Lame and Blind, and by Age or Sickness, or some other unhappy Circumstance, under an absolute Disability of helping themselves. These we must assist with our Hands and our Purses, our Basket and our Store. Some for want of a good Education, or virtuous Inclinations, stand more in need of our Counfels and Instructions: To such as these good Books are the most suitable Presents we can make. Others require our Patronage to vindicate them from the Injuries offer'd to their Persons, Estates, or Reputation. All this is excellently

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fumm'd up by Holy Job, in that Apology for himself, which he opposes to the hard Cenfures of his Friends, Chap. xxxi. Where he tells them, He did not eat his Morfel alone, but the Fatherless was Partaker with him. He did not suffer the Poor to go without a Covering, but the Naked was warmed with the Fleece of his Sheep. The Stranger did not lodge in the Streets, but he opened his Doors to the Traveller. He was Eyes to the Blind, and Feet to the Lame; a Father to the Poor, and an Advocate to the Oppressed. Thus we must do Good to All, not only to our poor Brethren who can make us no Recompense, but to our Enemies, to Men of different Countries and Religions. For which purpose the Samaritan is recommended to our Imitation, who fuccour'd the Jewish Traveller in his Extremities, although in the general, Tews and Samaritans were had in the greatest Detestation one of another.

WE must not satisfie our selves to do Good in our own Generation, but confult the Welfare of Posterity. There are many Parishes, where the far greatest Part of the Inhabitants are Labouring People, who can just make shift to provide their Families with Daily Bread, but have nothing to spare for the Education of their Children. How many fuch Children, who have afterwards proved great Ornaments to Church and State, had been abandon'd to a vile Course of Idleness, Lying, Stealing, and Prophaneness of all forts, and perhaps been cut off by the Hand of the Executioner o minut

cutioner in the midst of their Days, had it not been for the pious Munificence of our Forefathers, in founding Nurferies of Learning, and endowing them fo as to afford a Liberal Education to fuch Persons whose Circumstances could not answer the Charges of it ? a evision v

WE have more-especially Reason to hope, That the next Age will be better than the present, by means of the many Charity-Schools. which, God be praised, are now set up almost all over the Nation, and supported by those who have, I doubt not, a true Zeal for the Glory of God. The excellent Purposes of which Schools, so much for the Welfare of the Body in an Industrious, as of the Soul in a Religious Method of Education, are too well known to want a particular Account in this Place. What a Bleffed Charity is this, when we consider the Persons who are the Objects of it! For rarely are the Objects of Charity enumerated in Holy Scripture, but the Outcast and Fatherless are particularly recommended. How many of these are really such? and how many more are little better than fuch? whose Parents though living, yet being over-burthen'd by a Family too numerous for their small Income, or what is worse, disabled from working by Age or Sickness, or really negligent of their Children, are no Parents to them in the most weighty Concerns of their Life, a virtuous Education, and a good Imployment. AND b Becket 35, 10.

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AND while other Benefactions only fupply bodily Wants, this hath a peculiar Influence upon the Soul; by this, Children are taught the most useful Art of living well, and the most gainful Trade of laying up Treasures in Heaven. Besides, the Impressions of Religion and Virtue which they receive in their tender Years, and which it is to be hoped they will retain as long as they live, are a Benefit not only to themselves, but to all that are round about them; a Benefit not confin'd to their own Times, but which descends to future Generations.

SECONDLY, We must exercise our Charity according to our respective Abilities and Opportunities. The Apocryphal Books afford us excellent Rules to this Purpose. If thou haft Abundance, give Alms accordingly. If thou haft but little, be not afraid to give according to that little: for thereby thou layest up a good Treasure for thy self against the Day of Necessity. B Give unto the most High according as he hath enriched thee, and as thou hast gotten. And it was undoubtedly the Practice as well as the Doctrine of the first Age of Christianity, that against the first Day of the Week every Man should lay by a Part of his Week's Wages or Gains, according as God had prosper'd him, to be apply'd by the Governours of the Church to the Use of the Poor. For whose fake, when they are very numerous and necessitious, a good Man will

abridge himself of some lawful Pleasures and Enjoyments, rather than not spare what is requisite to keep them from starving. Indeed a wife Steward will lay to Heart that Law which he is told shall judge him at the last Day; viz. That to whom much is given, of him shall much be required; which plainly gives him to understand, that he is but a Trustee for pious and charitable Works, that the overplus of his Estate, all that is not necessary for the well-being of himself and his Family, must be expended upon them; which if he fails to do, he is guilty of a Breach of Trust, and accountable for it at the last Day. God hath made ample Provision for his whole Family; he hath appointed divers Ranks of Men in it: Some he hath fet over the rest, to give them their Meat in due Season. As they may not take it of themselves by Fraud or Force, fo neither may the Almoners withhold it from them; when it is in the Power of their Hand to give it. Neither may they part with it grudgingly, and, as it were by Compulfion, but freely and readily, in Obedience to their great Master's Will, who loveth a chearful Giver. And together with our own Bounty. we must be so far from hindring, that we must do all we can to promote the Liberality of others.

This is the Way to secure our selves in the Possession and Enjoyment of our good Things; this puts a comfortable Relish into them, and confirms them to us and our Posterity, against

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the Rapine and Violence of wicked Men, and all outward Accidents and Calamities, better than any human Power or legal Settlement. The merciful, fays our Lord, are bleffed, for they shall obtain Mercy. They are not only clear from those inhuman Vices, Covetousness, Injustice and Oppression, which render Men odious and detefted in the World, but they abound in those amiable Virtues of Liberality and Goodness, which command the Esteem and Favour of Mankind. They most resemble the Divine Majesty; whose Hand is always open, plentifully difpenfing to every Creature; and are most lively Images of Jesus Christ, who came into the World, as he delares of himself, not to be ministred unto, but to minister; and hath pronounced it more bleffed to give, than to receive. They have a continual Feast of Chearfulness, Contentment, and Satisfaction as well in what they impart to others, as in what they referve to themselves. They find the Truth of those seeming Paradoxes, that scattering is the Way to encrease, while withholding more than is meet tendeth to Poverty; that a small Thing which the Righteous hath, is better than great Riches of the Ungodly. But above all, they lay up for themselves Treafures in Heaven, and live in a joyful Expectation of meeting their Judge, who hath promised to have a special Regard to such good Works, and to reward them with extraordinary Degrees of Happiness, or made amount

I Four Mind were but under the Influence of that Religion we profess, we should then be fully perfwaded, that our Opportunities to do Good are the greatest Blessings God can confer upon us in this Life; and that to receive no temporal Rewards for our good Works, is a good Pledge and Assurance to us, that we shall be everlastingly rewarded at the Refurrection of the Just. And while those who neglected to rescue the distressed Members of Christ from perishing, by a seasonable and easy Benevolence, shall hear that dreadful Sentence pronounced upon them, 2 Depart from me, ye Cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no Meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no Drink: I was a Stranger, and ye took me not in: Naked, and ye cloathed me not : Sick, and in Prison, and ye visited me not: We on the other Hand, shall be graciously admitted into the Joy of our Lord, for having approv'd our Selves good and faithful Servants in these Respects.

LET us then every Day be careful to turn Acts of Charity and Mercy to the poor; Let us break off our Sins by this Righteousness, and render God propitious to us by fuch Sacrifices; so shall we make our selves Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness, and when these Things fail us, be receiv'd into

everlasting Habitations.

[!] Mat. xxv. 34, &c. Aa 2



CHAP. VII.

THE

VERNMENT

OFOUR

THOUGHTS.



ALTHOUGH our Thoughts fall not under the Regulation of Human Laws, as being nothing to the World, 'till they discover themselves in Words and Actions:

yet they are all naked and open to the Eyes of God, who is the Searcher of Hearts, and requires Purity in the inmost Recesses of the Breaft.

WHEN the Scribes and Pharifees quarrel'd at the Disciples of Christ, for eating before they had washed their Hands, contrary to the Tradition and Custom receiv'd among them, our Lor akes Occasion to instruct the People, that, a not that which goeth into the Mouth defileth a Man; but that which cometh out of the

Mat. IV.

Mouth, this defileth a Man. For out of the Heart proceed evil Thoughts, Murders, Adulteries, Fornications, Thefts, false Witness, Blasphemies. These are the Things which defile a Man. The Heart is the Fountain whence all our Words and Actions flow; they lye there as Seeds and Plants in the Ground, bringing forth Fruit according to their Kind. And therefore as Christ justly argues against the Pharisees: * Either make the Tree good, and his Fruit good; or else make the Tree corrupt, and his Fruit corrupt: For the Tree is known by his Fruit. O Generation of Vipers, how can ye, being Evil, speak good Things? For out of the Abundance of the Heart the Mouth speaketh. A good Man out of the good Treasure of the Heart, bringeth forth good Things; and an evil Man, out of the evil Treasure of his Heart, bringeth forth evil Things.

VAIN Thoughts have not only a Tendency to Sin, but are in themselves sinful. For that which makes Sin to be Sin, is the Want of Conformity to the Will of God. And that vain Thoughts are not conformable to his Will, he himself declares, when he warns us against drawing near to him with our Lips, and suffering our Hearts to wander from him, especially when we are about any religious Duty. This Want of Sincerity and Attention is charged upon the Pharisees, as what destroy'd the Heart and Virtue of all their Religion.

b Well did Esais prophese of you, Hypocrites:

Mat. xii. Mat. xv.

This People draweth nigh unto me with their Mouth, and honoureth me with their Lips; but their Heart is far from me. And therefore their Worship is declared to be vain, and they compared to whited Sepulchres, which coutwardly appear beautiful, but are within full of dead Mens Bones sand all Uncleanness. This is the Reason why our Lord to constantly styles these Men Hypocrites; it being of the Effence of Religion, that it be inward and hearty. b. For God is -a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship -bin in Spirit and in Truth. He is faid to recourse Truth in the inward Parts, and none but the pure in Heart shall fee him.

Our Thoughts then being fo well known to God, and so necessary a Foundation of our Words and Actions, it behoves us to watch over them, and fee they be imploy'd about their proper Objects. Keep thy Heart with all Diligence, faith Solomon, for out of it are the Issues of Life. Suffer them not either to be trifling and impertinent, for to fasten and dwell upon the Temptations of the Devil; but exercife your felf, as St. Paul did to have always a Conscience word of Offence toward God and toward Man. Be constantly furnished with wholefome Food for your Soul; as the Attributes of God, that he governs all Things, that he hath hinade this Life short and uncertain; but hath rappointed a Day wherein he will raise us all out of our Graves, and call us to an Account

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for the Things we have done in the Body, and reward or punish us to all Eternity, according as our Work shall be; and take occasion, from the Objects you daily meet and converse with, to make such Remarks, as may be for the Improvement of your spiritual Faculties and Affections. This was our Saviour's Way, always to take a Hint from the Company or Business he was in, to discourse of Heavenly Things.

IDLENESS being commonly the Occasion of most vain and wicked Imaginations, is therefore carefully to be avoided: Those who say they know not how to spend the next Hour, should so order the Course of their Life, that all their Portions of Time, as much as is possible, may be filled up with some useful, or

at least some innocent Imployment.

When any Sinful Thought enters your Heart, endeavour to direct your Mind to some other Object, and be careful to check and smother the first Beginnings of Sin. And if you use your self thus to guard and watch over your Heart, you will in Time, obtain such a Command over them, that you will have very little Trouble from those irregular Passions, which herefore upon several Occasions used to be kindled in you.

WHERE we fee Men so very cold and backward to spiritual Things, and so apt to spend all their Thoughts upon trisling, vain, or worldly Matters, there's reason to think, that it is with a great deal of Pains and Reluctancy,

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The SUM of the PART IV.

that they can bring themselves to think of their everlasting Concernments; but when once they have devoted themselves to the Service of God, so as to make it their Chief Concern, they will find it so far from being a Force upon them to meditate on spiritual Things, the Love and Favour of God, and a pure Conscience, that 'twill be natural for them to think of such Things, and they will find the greatest Pleasure in so doing.

But because, as St. Paul affirms, We are not able of our selves, so much as to think a good Thought, we must beseech God to create a clean Heart, and renew a right Spirit within us, that so the Thoughts and Meditations of our Hearts, which are naturally evil continually, may, by the Inspiration of his Grace, be so sanctified, that they may always be ac-

ceptable in his Sight.

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CHAP.VIII. CHRISTIAN RELIGION. 353



CHAP. VIII.

THE

GOVERNMENT

OF THE

TONGUE.



HE Government of the Tongue hath, in all Ages, been efteem'd a Lesson, fit to be taught by the wisest Masters, and not easily learn'd by the aptest of their Scho-

lars. For the Tongue, as St. James observes, tho it be but a little Member, yet is more untractable than any kind of Beasts, or Birds, or Serpents, or Things in the Sea, which have been and may be tamed of Mankind. Whereas, a contentious, slanderous, brawling Tongue is rarely, if ever, brought into order, and taught to move by the Laws of Reason. It is like a Spark of Fire, which however small in it self, yet falling upon combustible Matter, often sets whole Towns in a Flame, and reduces them to Ashes. Or like the biting of a Viper,

which leaves little or no visible Wound, but foon diffuses a deadly Poison all over the Body Just so an ill Tonque many Times doth a world of Mischief before it is perceiv'd. Great need hath every one therefore to follow Holy David's Practice, . To set a Watch over his Mouth, and to keep the Door of his Lips.

TO specifie all the Faults of the Tongue, might feem tedious. The Vice of Lying compreliends many in one. Nothing is more common nor more deplorable, than the Liberty People take of proftituting their Tongues to Fallhoods in their Communications one with another, to quibble and prevaricate in their Dealings, till they are harden'd in fuch Frauds, and are fo far from thinking it a Sin, that they account it a laudable! Art and Myflery in Traded Whereas the Scripture exprelly fays, that a false Weight and false Measure are an Abomination to the Lord, and for the very fame Reason over-reaching in Words must be ofortoo. Sr. Paul, in his first Epistle to the The Salonians a Beople of great Wealth and Trade, commands, b That no Man go beyond, that is, over-reach, or defraud his Brother in any Matter, because that the Lord is the Avenger of all rarely, if ever, brought into order, and thought

NOT to infift upon the feveral kinds of Hyes, which are commonly distinguished into the Pernicious, the Officious, and the Jocular,

The Call k 3. Thef. it. 6.

they may all be placed under the first De-nomination, and none to be jested with upon any Pretence whatever. Epaminondas. an Heathen, had fo great a Regard to Sincerity, that he would at no Time repeat a Falshood, tho' but in jest. Let us, who are the Disciples of Christ, resolve to let our Tongues and our Hearts always go together, for the Tongue is the Interpreter of the Heart. But there is another Sort of Lye very current in the Affairs of Life, which we may call the Promissory Lye. Men think they oblige and gratifie their Friends, by making them large Promises, but often fail in their Performances, partly through meer Oscitancy and Forgetfulness, and sometimes by a rash and absolute Engagement to do that which should be undertaken with Caution, and upon certain Conditions; as that, in case something of great Moment should interpose to alter the State of Things; a Man may be secure in his Truth and Honour, without an actual Performance of his Promife. But then he must be so clear, as not to want any Help from Shifts and Equivocations, to bring him off. The Reasons of his non-Performance must be fuch as he would be willing to admit himfelf, were he in the Place of his disappointed Friend, 21183, 10 23

LTE not one to another, Brethren, but let every Man speak Truth to his Neighbour: for ye are Members one of another. The detestable, Nature

onijak

Nature of this Sin may be estimated from its Author, and its Punishment. The Original Author and Father of Lyes is the Devil, as we learn from Christ's Mouth: And the Punishment of Lyars is in his Company, b in the Lake which burns with Fire and Brimstone, which is the second Death.

IT is fomething odd to observe how much Men practife the Trade of Lying, and yet how they pretend to abominate and loath it. There is not, in common Estimation, a greater Affront can be put upon a Man, than to charge him with a Lye. The Scandal and Reproach of it hath proved to some more intolerable than Death. And why fo, but because of the Baseness and Diabolical Nature of this Vice? It makes them fo very nearly related to the Devil, that indeed Christ declares him to be their Father; so that whenever they are called Lyars, they are in Effect call'd Children of the Devil. Let us then pray to God in the Words of the Pfalmift, Deliver my Soul, O Lord, from lying Lips, and from a deceitful Tongue.

NEXT to Lying, we may place that which usually hath a great Alloy of it, Backbiting and Standering. Offenders of this kind are

Jobn viii. 44. b Rev. xxi. 8. Pfalm cxx. 2.

innumerable. Little Conversation passes, where something is not said to the Disadvantage of some absent Person; many times upon no better Grounds than bare Hear-say, and uncertain Report. Few, even of the graver sort, scruple to rehearse any thing of this kind they have learned from others. Now there are, I must confess, just Reasons why Men that are notorious for any Vice or Crime, should be exposed and represented as they deferve, not only to prevent others from falling into their Hands, and suffering by their Wickedness; but that they may undergo that Shame and Reproach, which ever was and must be the Portion of such ill Men.

St. PAUL would not allow the Christians at Corinth to have any Communion, Religious or Civil, with any Brother that was a Fornicator, or Covetous, or Idolatrous, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner. And if they were thus bound to shun such Persons, no doubt but they might give the true Reason for it. But where a Man's Faults are not grown habitual to him, and hurt no body but himself, there not only Charity, but common Civility obliges us to be tender of his Reputation, and leave him to his own Correction, or to the private Admonitions of his faithful

Friend. Or if he was formerly ingaged in evil Courses, but is now reform'd, and be-come a good Man, Charity teaches us to cover his past Sins, even as we beg of God nor to remember our Iniquities. And in general, where there is Room for a fair and candid Construction, we must be ever ready to make it, being more inclinable to defend than accuse, where the Matter will bear it, as confidering, that he shall have Judgment without Mercy, who hath shewed no Mercy.

TO speak Evil of others, is not only Un-charitable, but Imprudent: for scarce any Man can be fo blind, as not to fee, That he who brings him ill Stories of others, will be apt to treat his Character no better, on another Occasion. There is no greater Evidence of the bad Temper of Mankind, than the general Proneness of Men to this Vice, who commonly incline to the cenforious and uncharitable Side, and feem to be better pleas'd with hearing Evil than Good of others; which shews Humane Nature to be strangely de-praved from its Original Rectitude and Innocency. And though they all pretend to be the Disciples of Him who taught nothing but Kindness, Meekness, and Charity, yet it is strange to see with what a slanderous and virulent Tongue, they will asperse and traduce other Mens Reputation, although the Injuries of this Nature are so great, that they are beyond

beyond all possible Reparation. Even some who make a more than ordinary Profession of Christianity, at the same time do live in a most palpable Contradiction to the Precepts of that Holy Religion, notwithstanding the Apostle sets Backbiters with Fornicators, and Murderers, and Haters of God, of whom it is said, b That they shall not inherit the Kingdom of God: And in another Place, the Character which the Apostle gives of such Men, is, That they shall be Lovers of themselves, Covetous, Boasters, Evil-speakers, without natural Affection, Persidious, False-accusers, &c. And St. James dexpressly says, If any Man among you seemeth to

THAT you may therefore beware of this heinous Sin; Bridle your Tongue, and be cautious and circumspect of your Words; be not forward to speak of the Faults of others, without great Reason and Necessity, and do not delight to hear Ill of them. Give no Countenance to busic Persons, who having an Itch of talking and meddling in the Affairs of other Men, which do no ways concern them, love to blazon their Miscarriages: Or if you cannot decently reprove them, then divert the Discourse

be Religious, and bridleth not his Tongue, but deceiveth his own Heart, that Man's Religion is

vain.

Rom. i. 29. 1 Cer. vi. 10. 17im. iii. 2, 3. Chap. i. 26,

fome other way; or if you cannot do that, feem not to mind it, and fo you may fufficiently fignify, that you do not like it. Indeed a main Cause of the Corruption of Mankind commonly confifts in the Viciousness of Conversation, which insensibly infects and debauches Mens Minds; as 'tis truly observ'd by the Apostle, Evil Communication corrupts good Manners.

DID Men but consult their own Happiness, they would refrain from Evil-peaking; for who knows whose Kindness and Good Will he may stand in need of in the Chances and Affairs of this Life? And how well-pleafing is this to GoD, how acceptable to others, and delightful and easie to our selves, to govern well our Tongues? What Man is he, faith the Pfalmist, * that desireth Life, and loveth many Days, that he may see Good? Keep thy Tongue from Evil, and thy Lips from speaking Falsebood.

AS we must not be forward to speak Evil of those whom we cannot commend, fo we ought not to detract from any Man's real Worth and deserved good Character, but readily give him all the Praise and Encomiums which he deserves. Virtue certainly is as much to be honour'd, as Vice

^{*} Pfalm xxxiv. 12, 13i

to be reproached and despised. The Devil is called, The Accuser of the Brethren, because he disparages their Goodness, and seeks for Blemishes in their Holy Life, as he did in the Case of Job. This he doth to depreciate Virtue, and rob it of its due Encouragement. And all envious Tongues are his Instruments in this Work, and Enemies to the common Good. Thus Judas spoke with Envy of the Woman who anointed our Lord's Feet with precious Ointment, pretending it might have been put to a better Use; Why was not this Ointment sold for three Hundred Pence, and given to the Poor?

IN Conversing with any Man, our Language must be as respectful as his Quality deserves; reverent to Superiors, humble to Inseriors, kind and courteous to all Men. This is the way to gain our selves Esteem, and make every Man our Friend. If others do not the same to us, it may be out of Ignorance; we must not be provoked by it, but teach them by our Example to behave themselves better. There is a Regard to be shewn to Humane Nature in every Man, and the Violation of it by scurrilous, contemptuous Language, is a very grievous Sin, as our Lord hath taught us in his Exposition of the Sixth Commandment.

COMMON Swearing and Curfing are such monstrous Sins, that we may well say of the Tongue addicted to them, It is set on Fire of Hell; Blasphemies and Imprecations being represented in Scripture as the Language of Devils. The Name of God is great, wonderful, and holy, not to be mentioned but upon grave Occasions, and with the greatest Veneration. This he hath strictly commanded, and inforced that Command with a Threatning to the Transgressor of it; and that Threatning he hath sometimes executed in a diresul manner; to admonish all Blasphemers, what a fearful Thing it is to fall into the Hands of an angry God, who is infinitely jealous of his Honour.

LASTLY, Tho' we may be free and pleasant in our Discourse at Seasons of Mirth and Rejoycing, and thereby promote Chearfulness and good Humour, yet we must ever be careful to keep our Tongues within the Bounds of Piety, Charity and Sobriety; not to burlesque Scripture, or droll upon any thing that is Sacred; not to break any bitter Sarcastical Jest upon the Company, or play with the Character of any absent Person; not to let any corrupt Communication proceed out of our Mouth, in lewd Songs or Stories; but see that our Discourse be seasoned with Salt, as

[.] Fames iii. 6.

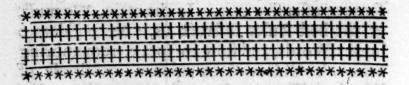
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the Scripture speaks, and have nothing noisome or offensive in it. In the main, We must,
as the best Rules instruct us, be considerate
in our Words, and slow to speak, remembring
Solomon's Observations upon a multitude of
Words, hat in them there wanteth not Sin,
there are divers Vanities, and that a Fool's Voice
is known by them. But, he that hath Knowledge, spareth his Words: and a Man of Understanding is of an excellent Spirit.

d THERE is not a Word in my Tongue, but, lo! O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Let all Clamour and Evil-speaking be put away from you. Put them in mind to be no Brawlers, but gentle, shewing all Meekness unto all Men. The Wisdom that is from Above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easie to be intreated. Finally, be ye pitiful, be courteous, not rendring Evil for Evil, or Railing for Railing, but contrariwise Blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye may inherit a Blessing.

^{*} Prov. x. b Ecel. v. c Prov. xvii. 27. d Pfalm cxxxix. 4. c Ephef. iv. 31. f Tit. v. 12, & Jam. iii. 17. b 1 Pet. iii. 8, 9.





and thus

THE

Rule of our Actions.

CHAP. IX.

Of a Peaceable and Christian Conversation.



S the inward Peace of our Minds confifts in the good Disposition of our Thoughts and Affections; fo the Peace of SOCIETY is maintain'd by a meek and calm

Deportment one towards another. Quarrels and Contentions commonly spring from unguarded Expressions, and indiscreet Handling of Matters. Our Blessed Saviour therefore, who came to promote Peace and Good Will among Men, hath done all that was possible to prevent the Beginnings of Wrath and Strife, denouncing a Woe against that Man by whom the Offence cometh, while he crowns the Lovers of Peace with Temporal and Eternal Beatitudes:

Beatitudes: Bleffed are the Meek, for they shall inherit the Earth. Blessed are the Peace-makers, for they shall be called the Children of God. They who are not only inoffensive themselves, but apt to reconcile others, and compose the Differences that are between them, shall be esteem'd as the Off-spring of that God who is

the Fountain of Peace and Love.

THERE are few Precepts in Holy Scripture fo often inculcated upon us, as those which concern the ordering of our Words and Carriage towards others, fo as to avoid Strife and Debate. And because 'tis impossible but that Offences will come (for however we may govern our own Passions, we cannot command those of other Men) therefore we must be ready to bear with them, and not exact every thing by the strictest Rules. must be content in some Cases to sustain Loss, and recede from our own Right. Not that Religion binds us to give up our felves a Prey to Men of no Conscience nor Honesty. There are good Laws made for the Security of our Persons and Estates, and we shall do well to put our selves under their Protection, when we are in real Danger. But we must not be litigious, nor forward upon every flight Occasion to drag Men to Courts and Prisons: And even when there is fufficient Cause for fuch kind of Redress, we must not be rigorous and over-hasty in our Proceedings. This was the Fault

a Matt. V.

of the Servant in the Gospel, whose Lord forgave him Ten thousand Talents. He went and arrested a Fellow-Servant of his, who owed him a Hundred Pence, and threw him into Prison 'till he should pay the Debt, when he might have had it without all this Trouble, if he had waited with Patience a little longer. This cruel Treatment incensed his Lord against him to put the old Bond of Ten thousand Talents in Execution. A fair Warning to all Creditors, that when they seek for their just Debts, they temper Mercy with Justice, proceeding leisurely, and (like the beloved Sons of God) with Bowels of Mercies, Kindness, Meekness, Long-suffering.

A T the same Time the Debtors must be admonished, That they be neither fraudulent nor negligent in answering just Demands; but pay what they have contracted for with a ready and willing Mind. Otherwise they will prove the Disturbers of the Peace, and be answerable for all the ill Consequences of their Frauds and Neglects, not only which fall upon themselves, but upon the Persons and Families of their Creditors, who many times are impoverished and ruin'd by the base Practices

of their Debtors.

I N bearing the Offences of daily Incursion, we are to consider our own as well as other Mens Infirmities, that in many Things we offend all, and therefore do mutually stand in need of brotherly Kindness and Candor. If we were to govern our selves by the strict Laws

of Retaliation, one Affront and Injury would fill beget another, and there would be no End of Contention, no Room for a charitable Pacification. But now we are forbid to return Evil for Evil, and Railing for Railing. If the Injury be such as calls for Revenge, we are not to take it with our own Hands. This would be to make our selves Judges in our own Cause, to usurp the Office of the Magistrate, even of the Sovereign Arbiter, who hath said, Vengeance is mine, I will repay it: who, it may be, is pleased to humble some

proud Conceit in us, by fuffering fuch Indignities to be put upon us; and then not to take them patiently, is to fourn against him. This made David meekly suffer the cursing of

Shimei, when his Servants offer'd to take off his Head for it. a So let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David. Who

then shall say, wherefore hast thou done so?

BUT if we were allow'd Retaliation, as it was under the old Law, yet Forgiveness is far sweeter, and yields a more rational and durable Pleasure. The Monuments of our Mercy are far a more pleasing, and delightful Spectacle than those of our Cruelty; and no fort of Thought doth usually haunt Men with more Terror, than a Reslection upon what they have done in the Heat of Revenge. But to overcome Evil with Good, to be kind and beneficent to Enemies, may soften their

² Sam. xvi.

Hearts, and bring them to a Temper worthy both of Men and Christians.

Most of the Wrath and Anger which disturbs the World, proceeds from a Root of Pride. Men care not how much they lessen and detract from others, while they are fo tender of their own Honour, that they cannot bear the least Omission of Respect. but are all in a Flame at the Man who neglects them. The Spirit of Haman could so little brook the uncourtly Carriage of Mordecai, that he would not be atoned with the Blood of the Offender, but the whole Nation of the Jews, must fall a Sacrifice to his Ambition. Thus haughty Men never think themselves great, but when their Feet are on the Necks of their Enemies. They think 'tis high and noble, to revenge their Quarrels and crush all that offend them. Whereas the true Magnanimity is quite the Reverse of all this. God, fays the Psalmist, is a righteous Judge, strong and patient, and he is provoked every Day. He is continually provoked by a World of impious Men, and he can easily destroy them every Moment; yet he declares his Almighty Power most chiefly in shewing Pity and Mercy. Christ was the express Image of his Father's Wisdom, infinitely superior herein to the Scribes and Pharifees, and he was as far from their Vanity and Oftentation; not disdaining that the meanest of the People, and even their young Children, shoud come about him when he taught. The greatest Unworthiness and

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and Ingratitude of Men, could not ftop the Current of his Mercies towards them. When he was urged by his Disciples, to call down Fire from Heaven upon an inhospitable City of the Samaritans, he check'd his mistaken Advifers, and meekly departed to another City. In his last Agonies, after a cruel Tryal of mocking and fcourging, when he was revil'd on the very Cross, with unparallel'd Infolence and Rudeness, he made the best Apology for his Murderers which their Crime was capable of : Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. If it was fit for the Son of God. to fet fuch a Pattern of Meekness and Gentleness, how much more fit is it for the Sons of Men to follow it? Let us then not be overcome of Evil, but overcome Evil with Good.

I conclude with St. Austin's Character of a peaceable Man. "He corrects, says he, as "much as he can, whatever he finds amiss in "the World. And tho' his well-inform'd "Judgment will not suffer him to approve of several Things which he sees others do, yet still he puts it not in their Power to shake and discompose his own Temper.

The END of the Fourth Part.

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TO sum up the whole, I will add in the last Place, the Divine Benedictions, which accompany the Righteous Man in the Performance of the foregoing Duties.

BLESSED is the Man that walketh in the Ways of the Lord. 2 As the Heaven is high above the Earth, so great is his Mercy toward them that fear him. The Mercy of the Lord is from Everlasting to Everlasting, upon them that fear him; and his Righteousness upon Childrens Children: To such as keep his Covenant, and to those that remember his Commandments to do them. the Upright there ariseth Light in the Darkness: he is Gracious and full of Compassion, and Righteous. Surely he shall not be moved for ever: The Righteous shall be had in everlasting Remembrance. He shall not be afraid of evil Tydings; his Heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. He hath differsed, he hath given to the Poor, his Righteousness endureth for ever; his Horn shall be exalted with Honour. c Blefsed is every one that feareth the Lord, that walketh in his Ways. For thou halt eat the Labour of thine Hands. Happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee. Thy Wife shall be as a fruitful Vine by the Sides of thine House; thy Children like Olive Plants, round about thy Table. Behold thus shall the Man be bleffed that feareth the Lord.

Pfal. ciii. b Pfal. cxii. c Pfal. cxxviii.

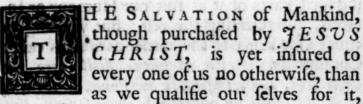


THE

TERMS

OFOUR

SALVATION.



by performing certain Conditions on our

This is easily explain'd by the following Instance. When a Lord grants to his Servant the Possession of an Estate, upon Condition that he shall at certain Times come into Court, and openly profess his Fealty and Service to his Lord: No Body will say that

the Servant by doing this, purchases the Estate, but that he only qualifies himself for it. And upon his Neglect to do this; especially if he neglects it out of Contempt, or takes part with his Lord's Enemies, and conspires against his Honour and Dignity; every Body must justifie the Lord, if he takes the Forseiture, resumes his Grant, and punishes that wicked Servant.

IN like Manner is our Title to Salvation good, so long as we perform certain Conditions: Which St. Paul hath expressed both negatively and positively: * We must deny all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts; and live a sober, righteous, and godly Life.

WE must honour our Lord in the Observance of his whole Will, not picking and choosing such Parts of it as suit our Humour or Interest, and rejecting the rest; but yielding an equal Obedience to the harder as well as easier Commands. For whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one Point, he is guilty of all; because he contemns that sacred Authority which hath enacted them all; and because the same corrupt Mind which emboldens him to violate one Law, would instigate him to break through any of the rest, if Pleasure or Prosit should incline him to it. So

^{*} Titus ii. 11, 12. b

b James ii. 10.

that his Innocence in other Respects is not owing to his Virtue or Sense of God's Authority; but to his Want of Temptation or

Opportunity.

W E are then faid to be Transgressors of the Law, when we wilfully commit those Things which we know God hath forbidden; or omit those Things, which we know he hath commanded and required us to do. If God did not exact universal and impartial Obedience, but allow'd fecret Referves for fome one Bosom Sin, one Man would chuse Covetousness, another Drunkenness, a third Uncleanness, and so on, till it would be no longer true, that Adulterers, Fornicators, Drunkards, &c. Should not inherit the Kingdom of God. They might entertain Hopes of getting into it, if universal Obedience without Partiality were not the Condition on which eternal Life is promised.

BUT by this universal Obedience, is not to be understood such a Persection of Holiness, as admits of no Alloy or Mixture of Sin, no Deviation from the Paths of Piety and Virtue. It may undeniably be proved from Holy Scripture, that a State of Salvation is consistent with some Failures and Desects in our Obedience; for in this Sense it is said, There is no Man living who sinneth not. So that the Persection required of us, is, not so much in the Work as in the Will; by reason of the Insirmity of our Nature we cannot always stand upright;

upright; but we ought heartily to endeavour it, and fincerely to repent of and amend whatever we find amiss in us.

This may serve to set those right, who doubt whether God requires an absolute and unfinning Degree of Holiness; and those also who are in a more dangerous Error, thinking he will fave Men through Christ, who forfake not their Sins, por do the Duties which he hath commanded. Christ our Saviour declares, That except we repent, we shall perish, and this Repentance must consist, not only in a Ceasing to do Evil, but in a daily Improvement and filling up of those good Duties, wherein we find we have been deficient. Thus Christ faith: Every Tree that bringeth not forth good Fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the Fire. St. Paul testifies, That without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord. St. Peter exhorts us to and to our Faith, Virtue, and to Virtue, Knowledge; and to Knowledge, Temperance; and to Temperance, Patience; and to Patience, brotherly Kindness; and to brotherly Kindness. Charity.

IN this Sense therefore God requires perfect Obedience to his Commands; and injoyns it as a Condition without which we shall not be saved, that in what Instances soever we

² Pet, i. 5.

have in Time past offended, in those we walk warily for the Time to come; in whatever Points of Duty we have been wanting, we now advance and grow in Grace.

HE therefore who lays hold of the gracious Promises of the Gospel, to recover himself from any known Sin, and is so sensible of his past Insirmities, as thenceforth to keep a stricter watch over himself; he who upon a Review of his Performances, perceives that he gets Ground, and is more and more confirm'd in all Goodness; he who industriously avoids the Temptations by which he hath formerly fallen; who unavoidably meeting with Trials which formerly prevail'd over him, hath now the Faith and Power to hold out against all their Importunities; This Man hath the best Grounds to hope, that he is in a sure State of Salvation.

Thus much is the indispensable Duty of every penitent Sinner, that he demonstrate the Sincerity of his Love to God, by stricter and closer Approaches to perfect Obedience; that he daily weaken all vitious Habits, and introduce the contrary Virtues into Practice. This is that Condition of our Acceptance, that Law of the Gospel, which will admit of no Abatements at the last Day. And even so, it is an invaluable Blessing to be admitted into the Kingdom of God. But of all those who make

make a plausible Profession of Christianity, where shall we find One who thus sincerely dischargeth his Part of it? We may with the Prophet Jeremiah, Run to and fro through the Streets of this City, and seek if we can find a Man; if there be any that executeth Judgment, that seeketh the Truth, that serveth the Lord with a perfect Heart and a willing Mind. Two or three in a Parish: nothing in comparison of the vast Multitudes who are Baptized and Register'd as Christ's Soldiers and Servants. So true is that Saying of his: Many are called, but few chosen.

This is the truly Righteous Man, the Israelite indeed, in whom is no Guile; who doth not rest in the external Part of Religion, but worships God with all his Heart, and Soul, and Strength, and Mind; who studies to know his whole Will, and to do it; who is not content with ordinary Attainments, but strives to excel in every Thing that is good. This is the healthy and sound Constitution of the Soul, which like that of the Body, causeth every Faculty to perform its Function with Facility and Pleasure.

Could we but heartily fix upon our great End, and make the whole Business of our Life subservient to it, this would prevent those Inroads which Temptations make upon our Soul, and which render our Obedience partial

partial and defective. We should not receive fuch strong Impressions from the various Circumstances of this uncertain State, nor so often step out of our Way to catch at the Riches, Honours, and Pleasures of the World. If our Hearts were but in Heaven, our Discourses and whole Conversation would relish of it: our Cares, our Thoughts and Affections, would like the Streams of a River flow towards it. And our Hearts would be there. if our Treasure were there, and we did but esteem the Felicities of that Kingdom accorda ing to their true Nature and Dignity. Then would our Feet run the Ways of God's Commandments with Pleasure and Delight, and we should earnestly press towards the Hope that is fet before us, the Prize of our high Calling in Christ Jefus.





A

Serious EXHORTATION

TO

Repentance and a Good LIFE.

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HE absolute Necessity of performing the aforesaid Conditions in Order to the Attainment of SALVATION, will bring every considering Person seriously

to try and examine himself, whether a Promise being made him of entring into Life, he is not in Danger of falling short of it. Since a little Leaven of wilful Sin, one single favourite Lust, will corrupt the whole of of a good Life, and defeat all Endeavours in other Respects; it behoves you to search for it with all Diligence, and where-ever you find it, to purge it out by a hearty Repentance. You may possibly obtain a good Report among Men, at the cheap Rate of a Form of Godliness; but remember, you are not to be judged by them, but by him who requireth Truth in the inward Parts. You may, with

Agrippa, be almost a Christian, and, with Herod, gladly hear, and readily do many Things taught you by God's Word, and yet be in the Bonds of some Iniquity or Lust, which keeps you from laying hold on eternal Life. Consider, that the Wisdom which is from above, is (as St. James speaks of it) without Partiality, and without Hypocrifie. You may think it a Master-Piece of Art and Policy to palliate your Unfoundness, and give it the Colour of Truth; but you cannot deceive God, who alone is to determine of your final Condition; and fo the Cheat falls at last upon your felf, who flatter'd your own Heart with the Sinner that goeth two Ways, faying, a I (ball have Peace, tho' I walk in the Imagination of mine Heart. But of fuch a one the Scripture faith, The Lord will not spare him, but his Anger and his Jealousie Shall smoke against that Man; all the Curfes that are written in this Book shall lie upon him.

Would but feriously lay these Things to heart, while they have Time and Space for Repentance! If they would but consider how inexcusable every Act of Disobedience in Christians is, since God hath given them both Light enough to see their Way, and sufficient Strength to carry them through it. They are instructed with St. Paul, both how to be abased, and how to abound; not to be puff'd up with Prosperity, nor beaten down and dispirited by

Deut. XXIX, 19.

Adversity. They have in his Person, an Experiment and Proof, that the Divine Aid afforded us, is superior to the strongest Temptations, and enables us to do all Things thro' Christ who strengtheneth us. That we need not be anxious about the Provisions of this mortal Life, much less enter into any finful Measures to procure them, fince infinite Wisdom is always at Work for us, and hath promised to lay no heavier Burthen upon us than we are able to bear, to with-hold no good Thing from us, fo long as we live a godly Life; so that we may with full Assurance cry out; the Lord is on my Side, I will not be afraid of any Dangers: he who hath the whole Earth in his Hands. is my Shepherd, I cannot be destitute of any Thing that is convenient for me. Such Confiderations as these would in a great, Measure prevent the Miseries of the present Life, and lead us to imploy the greatest Part of our most ferious Thoughts upon the Welfare of our immortal Souls.

FROM thus confidering the Importance and Reasons of our Duty, we must proceed to form steddy Resolutions for performing every Branch of it. Are there some Temptations more pleasing to our corrupt Natures, and more apt to prevail over us? We must maintain our Guard against them, and not suffer our selves by any Means to be brought within their Instruence and Sollicitations. Do we, upon a Review of our past Lives, observe manifold Omissions of our Duty both towards God and Man?

Man? We must immediately resolve to redeem the Time we have lost, by filling up what remains with Abundance of good Fruits. All this we must peremptorily determine, and faithfully execute when the Opportunities of Action offer themselves; daily imploring the Assistance of Divine Grace, to enable us to reduce all our good Designs into Practice, and to persevere in the same unto our Lives End.

HOW many Millions of Souls are now irrecoverably loft, who refted in some faint ineffectual Purpofes of Reformation, flattering themselves, that the Defire of Grace was Grace, and fuffering their good Motions to fly off, and vanish away as the early Dew! Such is the double-minded Man St. James speaks of, who is unstable in all his Ways: He will reconcile Contradictions, and ferve both God and Mammon. He hopes for the Rewards of Piety while he enjoys the Pleafures of Sin, and divides his Services between the Duties of Religion, and the Works of the Devil: Sometimes he is very affiduous at his Devotions, but he runs but a short Course; he quickly starts afide into the broad Ways of the World again.

Virtue and Religion, which hath been affum'd by ill Men, as well fuiting the Humours and Interests of the World. The Devil himself chooses to be serv'd with Temples and Sacrifices. He had the Considence to ask our Blessed Lord and Saviour to fall down and worship him.

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WHEN the old World was destroy'd by the Flood, we cannot doubt but there were more Pretenders to Religion than those who were faved in the Ark; and that many who perished in the Flames of Sodom and Gomorrah, had often caused the Smoke of their Altars to ascend. And thus it will be at the general Conflagration of all Things. In that Day, fays Christ, many will say unto me, Lord, Lord, have we not eat and drank in thy Presence, and thou hast preached in our Streets? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: Depart from me, ye that work Iniquity. We see then there is something of Singularity in being foundly Religious. We must not be discouraged in our Way to Heaven, though we have not all the good Company we could wish. Nay, tho? Men should revile and persecute us, and say all manner of Evil against us for Christ's Sake, we may go on with Courage, as knowing, that great is our Reward in Heaven.

Apostle, It is a very small Thing for me to be censured of Man, so long as I approve my self to God. For it is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? Our Account at the last Day will depend not upon our present Reputation in the World, but as then in Reality and very Deed we shall be found to be.

THE Joy and Comfort therefore of every good Man, confifts in the Assurance he hath of his own Sincerity, that he heartily studies in all Things to please God. The Ground

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of our Rejoicing, saith St. Paul, is this, even the Testimony of our Conscience, that in Simplicity and godly Sincerity not with sleshly Wisdom, but by the Grace of God, we have had our Conversation in the World. This is our surest consolation in the midst of the sharpest Afflictions and hardest Censures.

LET us not then run into the common Error of Mankind, who while they are in the Flower of their Health and Vigour, immerse themselves in the Pleasures or Affairs of this Life, and are deaf to all Counfels and Perswafions to be wife, and to confider their latter End. This great Work they delay from Time to Time, 'till old Age overtakes them, and then (contrary to the ancient Law) they offer Sacrifices of the Lame and the Blind, the feeble Remains of impair'd Health and Strength, But is it fit that God should be pleas'd with their cold and languid Devotions, after a continued Courfe of Senfualities, and Abuses of his Grace? The facred Writers earnestly move us to consider, that Now is the acceptable Time and Day of Salvation: Wherein if we refuse to hear and obey the Voice of God, he may justly reject us when the evil Days of Fear and Trembling come upon us. Suppose we had an Affurance that we should go out of the World, not by a sudden Death, but gradual Decay, yet how poor a Compensation could we make upon the Bed of Languishing, for all the Impieties and Follies of a mispent Life? When we shall not be able, seriously,

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to think of any Thing, by reason of our Pains, and the Concern we shall have about the Means to procure some Ease and Respite from them. What a miserable Confusion must they needs bom, who are fummon'd to give up their Accounts, and so little prepared for it? Or if the great and terrible Day of the Lord fhould surprize us (as we are often warned to expect it may) what a strange Consternation shall we be in, when the Son of Man shall appear in the Clouds of Heaven with Power and great Glory; when the Sun shall be darkened, and the Moon turn'd into Blood, and all the Hoft of Heaven shall be shaken; when Nature shall labour under its last Pangs and Convulsions, and the whole Creation flame and melt about us: when the Heavens shall be shrivel'd up as a Roll of Parchment, the Earth torn away from its Center, and every Mountain and Island removed! What Thoughts can the wifest Heads have in the midst of so much Confusion and Terror? Or if they could have any, what Time would there be to put them in Practice? When they shall see an Angel standing upon the Sea, and upon the Earth, lifting up his Hand to Heaven, and swearing by Him that liveth for ever and ever, that Time (ball be no more; as this dreadful Day is described, Rev. VI. 15. X. 5, 6. Where Sinners are represented at the Appearance of this great Judge, not as flying to God in Hopes of his Mercy, but as running from him in utter Despair of it; When Kings and great Captains, the most mighty and rich Men, shall hide themselves in the Dens and

and Caves of the Earth, and say to the Mountains, Fall on us, and to the Rocks, Cover us from the Face of Him that sitteth on the Throne, and from the Wrath of the Lamb: For the great Day of his Wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand? This Wrath is called the Wrath of the Lamb, to signific to us, That nothing is more terrible than Meekness and Patience, when thoroughly provoked and turned into Fury.

IN such horrible Distractions shall the stoutest and boldest Sinners upon Earth be, when they shall be surprized by that great and terrible Day of the Lord. And their Case is not much better nor more comfortable, who in the ordinary Course of Mortality, are carried from this World to another, without being duly prepared for so Great a

Change.

I am loth to enter into the Controversie of a Death-bed Repentance: I am persuaded there is scarce any such Thing. We have but one Example, that I know of, in the whole Bible, of the Repentance of a dying Sinner, viz. That of the Penitent Thies upon the Cross. And the Circumstances of his Case are so peculiar and extraordinary, that it cannot afford any Ground of Hope and Encouragement to slothful and improvident Christians. We cannot now suffer in the Company of our Blessed Lord; and if we could, it is not certain that we should behave our selves towards him so well as the Penitent Thief did, and make so good an End of a bad Life.

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EVERY prudent Man therefore who hopes to be rewarded with Heaven, will begin his Work betimes, and take the Morning of his Life for it, while he can find Pleasure in it, and before irregular Desires settle themselves into Habits, and get the Ascendant and Command over him.

This is the Way to make our present Life easie and comfortable to us. Religion is so far from being in it felf grievous and distastful, that it fully answers the Character which the wife Solomon gives of it; Her Ways are Ways of Pleasantness, and all her Paths are Peace. For this I appeal to the Consciences of those who have tasted all kinds of Pleasure, Whether they don't find more folid Satisfaction in the House of God, and the Sacrifices of Prayer and Thanksgiving offer'd up in that Place, than in all the airy Diversions of a most fplendid Theatre? Whether they are not more easie in their Minds, when they keep to a regular Method of Devotion, and strictly adhere to the Laws of Sobriety and Goodness, than when they break through them for the transient Gratification of some intemperate Lust or Appetite? God hath animated us with Heaven-born Souls, which may be amufed for a while, but never truly fill'd with less than that Celestial Food convey'd to them in the Exercise of Religious and Spiritual Duries. A saviolemo avalled bluodi ave well aist him to work us the Domican Place of and

Nothing can be more easily demonstrated than this, That our present Felicities are best secured and enjoy'd, when we live agreeably to the Laws of our Religion. Temperance is absolutely necessary to preserve Health, and give a quick and pleasing Relish to our Food. Uprightness in Dealings maintains Commerce and Society, which cannot subsist without it. Assability and Courtesse is the way to gain Mens Affections, and dispose them to do us any good Office when it lies in their Power. Reverence to Magistrates and Superiors, keeps up the Laws in due Force, and guards us against Assaults and Injuries.

But if these Temporal Advantages justifies the Wisdom of being Religious, how strongly do those which are Eternal plead for it? How infinitely do they weigh down all the Pains and Hardships which can possibly result from it? Were we continually to be upon our Knees; were we daily to incompass the Table of our Lord; were we like the devout Anna, never to depart out of the Temple, but serve God with Fastings and Prayers Night and Day; This would be so far from being a Price equivalent to our everlasting Inheritance, that it could not merit a few Years Enjoyment

of it.

Surely the greatest Part of Christians are such only by Custom; they have the Face of Religion without the Force of it; are born of Christian Parents, but not regenerated by the Holy Spirit; lay Claim to the Merits of Christ.

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Christ, but want that Love and Obedience which make up the Character of his Disciples. In short, they devise a new Gospel, and propose to themselves a new Way of Salvation.

IF we are ferious in our Pursuit of Happiness, we must feek it in that Way which Christ, who hath the Disposal of it, hath set before us: We must proceed in an even and steddy Course of Piety, must immediately repent of any Error or Misdeed, supplicating God for his Pardon and preventing Grace. We must by a faithful Imitation of Christ, convince the World, that we fincerely believe and embrace his Doctrines; that we fear his Threatnings, by rejecting every thing that is finful; that we depend upon his Promifes of a better Life, by renouncing the Pomps and Vanities of This. Let our whole Spirit and Conversation be so lovely, and venerable, and praise-worthy, as that hence it may be known to what Master and what Religion we belong. O that Men were wife! that they understood this! that they would consider their latter End! that they would dwell much upon the Thoughts of DEATH and JUDGMENT, and the Unchangeable STATE which follows thereupon.

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OF THE

Worthy RECEIVING

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Holy SACRAMENT

OF THE

LORD'S SUPPER.



HE Office of the Holy Communion of the LORB'S SUPPER, properly belongs to that Part of our Christian Institution which contains our Dury to GOD.

But because this High Act of Devotion is generally performed at certain special Seasons, I have therefore chose to treat of it distinctly in this Place: and in a compendious Manner; as being persuaded, that Persons who are Religiously disposed to be Worthy Communicants, cannot want some of those numerous Tracts which are set forth for their Direction in this solemn Part of

Religion.

Our Duty of Communicating at the Lord's Table, is as clearly declared in Scripture, as any other Branch of Christianity whatever. Our Lord's own Words at the Institution of this Sacrament, are, Do this in Remembrance of Me. St. Paul, who was taught it immediately from Heaven, bath bestow'd a particular Discourse upon it, in which he tells us, That as oft as we eat this Bread, and drink this Cup of the Lord, we do shew forth his Death. And the Practice of the Primitive Church, who rarely, if ever, omitted this Holy Sacrament in their solemn Assemblies for Religious Worship, shews us what was the Sense of Christ and his Apostles in this Point.

This is an Institution of Religion, grounded upon the sole Authority of the Commander, which is here fully sufficient and unquestionable. Moses was but a Servant in the House of God; yet Obedience was exacted to his Form of Worship upon the highest Penalties. How much more shall Christ, the Lord of the House, be obey'd in such reasonable Services as he enjoyns? He who, as St. Paul speaks, hath purchased his Church with his own Blood: Who, as he himself saith, hath all Power in

Heaven and Earth committed to him.

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AND while by doing this, we approve our Fidelity and Obedience to our Lord, we are at the same Time inriching our selves with all Spiritual Benefits; as, The Pardon of our Sins, the Grace and Assistance of the Holy Spirit, to confirm us in all other good Duties, and support us under all Hardships and Sufferings; the Assurance of the Divine Love, and Earnest of immortal Life.

Affiduity in this Sacred Office. Did our Lord, when he was about to fuffer for us, oblige us to commemorate his Sufferings in a Way so easie and agreeable to us; and shall we deny him this reasonable Request, and tell him by our Neglect of it, That we don't think his Passion worth the Remembring? This would be the most horrible Slight and Affront we could offer him. We could not be so unmindful of the dying Words of any Person, for whom we had a real Kindness and Friendship.

THE greatest Reason which is pretended for the Neglect of this Sacrament, is an Expression of S. Paul, intimating the Danger of Unworthy Receiving. He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh Damnation to himself, not considering the Lord's Body. If the Danger of Unworthy Receiving be so very great, 'tis concluded to be the safest way, not to Receive at all. But this is a great Mistake, it being equally at least, if not more dangerous, to live in the utter Neglect of this Duty.

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The Obligations to it have been already mention'd; and the Danger of Neglecting it, is in several Places declared to be very great. Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, says Christ, and drink his Blood, ye have no Life abiding in you: The whole Discourse of our Lord in that Place, may be well applied to this Holy Sacrament. Again, They who in the Parable refused to come to the Marriage-Feast, were as surely destroy'd for making light of the Invitation, as he who came without a Wedding-Garment.

THE greatest Indisposition for this Sacrament, is, being an habitual and resolute Sinner. This is the Sense of the Church, declared in her Exhortation to this Sacrament. If any of you be a Blasphemer of God, an Hinderer or Slanderer of his Word, an Adulterer, or be in Malice or Envy, or in any other grievous Crime, repent of your Sins, or else come not to that Holy Table. Here we see, that the grossest of Sinners are no otherways debarr'd Communion, than as they are impenitent, and still ingaged in their impious Courses. For afterwards we hear it faid to all those who offer themselves to be Communicants: Te that do truly and earnestly repent you of your Sins, and are in Love and Charity with your Neighbours, and intend to lead a New Life, following the Commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his Holy Ways; draw near with Faith, &c. So that we fee, it is not any past Sins of what kind soever, but only

only a Perseverance in them, which is a fufficient Impediment to our Worthy Receiving the Lord's Supper. Our common Defects and unavoidable Frailties and Infirmities, must not deter us. These don't occasion that Unworthiness spoken of by St. Paul, which makes it dangerous to communicate. There is an Unworthiness which the best Christians are guilty of, and confess in that Prayer of the Church's We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own Righteousnes, but in thy manifold and great Mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the Crumbs under thy Table. And after they have communicated, they don't pretend to be wholly cleanfed from it, but still acknowledge it in these Words: Although we be unworthy through our manifold Sins, to offer unto thee any Sacrifice, yet we befeech thee to accept this our bounden Duty and Service, not weighing our Merits, but pardoning our Offences. You see the Church supposes a Degree of Unworthiness in all Communicants; and yet she calls the Act of Communicating, Our bounden Duty and Service; which plainly inferrs. That we are bound to Communicate, notwithstanding some Unworthings and Unfitness for so facred a Duty.

IT is indeed to be confessed, that none are worthy to Receive this Holy Sacrament, but those who believe the Doctrines of the Gospel, and order their Conversation according to the Precepts of it. But there is no D d Reason

Reason why we should continue under either of these Disabilities, since it is so easie for us to remove them, and attain to that Worthiness which is required of us. Besides what hath been already observed from the Communion Office, I shall inculcate a very plain and compleat Rule to this Purpose, at the End of our Church Catechism: where the Things required of every Person who comes to the Lord's Supper, are said to be these Five:

FIRST, That he truly repent him of his former Sins.

SECONDLY, That he stedsastly purpose to lead a New Life.

God's Mercies, thro' Christ.

FOURTHLY, That he thankfully remember his Death. And,

FIFTHLY, That he be in Charity with

AN these Things a Man must examine himself; and to do this, there is no more required, than a common Degree of Knowledge, with so much Time as may well enough be spared from the necessary Concerns of Life.

THE Rule whereby to examine our past Manners and Course of Life, is the Commandments of God; by which we may, as in a Glass, discover wherein we generally offend

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in Will, Word, or Deed; fuch Offences we must bewail, and confess them to Almighty God, begging his Grace to prevent us, and preserve us from them for the Time to come. The Sum and Substance of our Faith is best comprehended in the Articles of the CREED; which being propounded to us, for our particular Affent and Acknowledgment, both at our coming into the World, and at our going out of it; I mean, at Baptism, and the Visitation of the Sick; I cannot doubt but a solemn Recital and Recognition of them, is a good Preparative to the Holy Eucharift. I know not whether this be commonly done; I have not observ'd it to be mention'd in the common Helps to Devotion composed for this Occasion. Perhaps the Creed is thought too trite a System of Faith; it is indeed made fo, as it is used by some People: But when seriously and deliberately repeated, and rarified by that folemn Form of Affent which the Church hath prescribed, All this I stedfastly believe, it is that found and faving Faith which establishes the Soul on the Rock of our Redemption. For a farther Explication of the Nature and Benefits of this Holy Sacrament, it will be good to perufe fuch Chapters of the New Testament as treat of it; particularly the VI of St. John's Gospel, with those Discourses which our Lord made at the Institution of it; Matth. XXVI. Mark XIV. Luke XXII.

fame time. That he was ready to farisfie any Tolk in a min wrong ob Q making him a four-

For examining the State of our Confcience towards Others, that Saying of our Lord must be our general Direction in this Case: What soever ye would that Men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them; for this is the Law and the Prophets. Now if any one hath wronged us by Word or Deed, our Wish and Defire is, That they would make us Reparation for the Injuries they have done us. In like manner, must we be ready to offer Satisfaction and make Restitution to the uttermost of our Powers, for all Injuries and Wrongs we have done to others. This is indifpenfably necessary, not only for the worthy Receiving of the Sacrament, but for the right Performance of any other Religious Duty. We cannot be Charitable, and give Alms, before we be Juft, and give every Man that which is his Right. God is faid to hate Robbery for a Burnt-Offering; to let us know, That however constant and devout we may appear in his Worship, however liberal we may be in contributing to any good Work, if we do it out of any unjust Gains, which we have got by the descitful Weight and Meafure, by Rapine and Oppression, by perverting of Justice and Judg-ment, it is all an Abomination, and instead of pleading for us, will testifie against us at the last Day. And therefore the converted Publican Zachaus, when he devoted half his Goods to the Use of the Poor, declared at the fame time, That he was ready to fatisfie any Man he had wronged, by making him a fourfold

fold Restitution. This is one of the Scripture Passages read at the Offertory, with a Design no doubt, to put Men in mind, That they study to be Just, as well as Charitable.

Some Men act as if they were persuaded, that their forgiving all the World, was a sufficient Atonement for the Injuries they have done to others. But this hath no Foundation either in Religion or Reason. One Man may wrong me, and I may wrong another: My Forgiveness of the former, is no manner of Compensation to the latter; neither doth it acquit me of Fraud and Injustice in the Sight of God.

WE are indeed all bound to mutual Forgiveness, so far as not to take Revenge one of another. But this doth not prejudice us in any just Demands, nor take away our Claim to that fair and honest Dealing which every Man is intitled to. Much less may we encourage our selves in wronging one Part of the World, because we can forgive so many on the other side as wrong us. This would be to establish Iniquity by a Law, that excellent Law of Forgiveness which we must observe towards others, when out of Ignorance, Precipitancy, or want of Power to do better, they trespass against us.

THESE Things are generally obvious to an ordinary Capacity. But because there may be some Cases wherein a Man cannot quiet,

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his own Conscience, the Advice of the Church is, That he go to some discreet and learned Minister of God's Word, and open his Scruples to him, that he may receive the Benefit of Absolution, together with such Spiritual Advice as may give him Ease, and minister Comfort to him. If this Application were made in due Season, not only before the Sacrament, but at other Times when the Mind is perplex'd and troubled, it might prevent many dismal Thoughts, which often increase to Melancholy and Distraction, to the Disadvantage of Religion in general, and the Hindrance of many good Duties in the Persons afflicted with them.

To renew that Vow and Promise we made in our Baptism, To renounce the Devil and all his Works, to believe in God, and to keep his Commandments. This Vow we have grie-vously violated by Thought, Word, and Deed, and so have forseited our Christian Privileges, and made our selves the Children of Wrath, as we were by Nature. But our gracious and long-suffering God is pleased to accept of an Atonement, which he hath appointed to be made in this other Sacrament, by a hearty Profession of our Faith in Christ, our Sorrow for our past Misdeeds, and our unseigned Resolutions to perform our Part of the Christian Covenant for the Time to come. This is we the with a true and faithful Heart, our Heavenly Father is reconciled to us, and owns us

for his Children, and restores us to all the Spiritual Benefits of our Profession as fully, as if we had never done any thing to forfeit them.

UPON the Approach of this Holy Solemnity, when we are recollecting our Transgreffions, confessing and bewailing them before Almighty God, and imploring his gracious Pardon for the fame, we should do well, as Holy David directs, to enter into our Chamber, and there filently commune with our own Hearts. Behold, O my Soul! how the Great KING, who stretches out the Heavens like a Curtain, and lays the Beams of his Chambers in the Waters, and maketh the Clouds his Chariots, and rideth upon the Wings of the Wind: How he, I fay, hath condescended to prepare that Spiritual Manna for thee, which will nourish thee unto Everlasting Life! How wilt thou escape, if thou neglect so great Salvation? Here is represented the greatest Love which was ever vouchsafed to Man; viz. the Son of God subjecting himself to Death, even the Death of the Cross, to make thee Partaker of a happy and glorious Immortality! the Lord of Life and Glory divefted of his Robes, that thy Nakedness might be cloathed with his Righteousness! the Fountain of Riches and Honour humbling Himfelf to the lowest State of Poverty and Reproach, that thou mightest be filled with all the Riches and Dignities of the Son of God!

^{*} Pfalm iv. 4.

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Most gladly therefore, O my Soul! will I go to the Temple of the Lord, to pay my Vows which I made in my Baptism, to be his faithful Soldier and Servant, and to ratifie that Covenant which he hath seal'd with his most precious Blood. Most thankfully will I receive these Pledges of his Love, and offer him the lively Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving for the same.

QUICKEN me therefore, O LORD! and inflame my Heart with a Zeal worthy of these Benesits. And as thou hast given us thy well-beloved Son to reconcile us to thy self, so likewise grant us thy Holy Spirit to sanctisse our Souls and Bodies for thy Service. Then we who of our selves have not sufficient Strength to come unto thine Altar, will, by the Assistance of thy all-powerful Grace, never faint in running the Ways of thy Commandments.

AT the Time of Receiving the Holy Sacrament, the Minister calls upon us to lift up our Hearts, intimating, That then we should be more-especially intent upon Heavenly Things. We must then remember, How the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ was broken, and his Blood shed for us. We must consider that our Sins were the Thorns which struck into his Temples, and the Nails which sasten'd his Hands and Feet to the Cross; and thence imagine how loathsome Sin is in the Sight of God, who spared not his only beloved Son for it, when he appear'd in our stead, and took our Burden and Debt upon Himself: And how

how much the Guilt of it is aggravated to us Christians, lince we do, as the Apostle speaks, thereby crucifie the Son of God afresh, and put

him to open Shame.

CONSIDER the inestimable Benefits we receive by a due Participation of this Holy We spiritually eat the Flesh of Sacrament. Christ, and drink his Blood: we are made one with him, and he with us. Our finful Bodies are made clean by his Body, and our Souls washed through his most precious Blood. We are incorporated in his mystical Body. which is the bleffed Company of all Faithful People: we obtain Peace with God, Remission of our Sins, the Graces and Comforts of the Holy Spirit, the Promises of a joyful Refurrection, and Inheritance with Christ in everlasting Glory. Let us then take the Cup of Salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord. It is a principal Part of our Duty at this Time, to abound in Praises and Thanksgivings to Him who hath paid so infinite a Ransom for us. What unspeakable Goodness and Love is this! What a fure Pledge of the Divine Benignity and Regard to us? He that spared not his own Son, but gave him up for us; how shall he not with him give us all Things freely to enjoy?

I might have been excused, if I had (as I had almost) forgot to mention Alms and Oblations, which by the most early Practice of the Church, accompany the Celebration of the Lord's Supper. The Passages of Holy Scripture appointed

appointed to be read while the Collection is making, are so very pathetical and well-suited to Persons of all Circumstances, that they must needs touch the Hearts of those who are not quite past feeling. If there be any thing in them of the Bowels and Compassions of Jesus Christ, which they are now about to commemorate, these Scriptures will not fail to draw them forth towards his poor distressed Members, whom he hath appointed to be his Receivers on these Occasions.

WHEN you have received the BREAD, offer up this, or some such short Ejaculation:

Merciful LORD! Grant that by the Sufferings of my dear Saviour, who was crucified for me, I may escape Eternal Sufferings, and be made Partaker of Everlasting Life.

AFTER the Cup, lift up your Heart in these, or the like Words:

O Gracious GOD! Grant that by the shedding of the Blood of thy dear Son, I may be washed from the Guilt of all my Sins.

WHEN the Communion is ended, and you are return'd home, do not presently let your Thoughts run upon other Matters, but enter into your Closet, and offer up your private Sacrifice of Praise to God for vouchsafing to admit you to this Spiritual Feast of his Son; beseeching him to grant, That you may have Grace

Grace faithfully to fulfill whatever you have pioully refolved; and especially to withstand those Temptations to which you are most exposed, either by the Circumstances of your Life, or your Natural Propension.

WHEN you return to your Worldly Affairs, put your late Resolutions in Practice; apply them to the Government of your Words and Actions; let it appear, that you profit by the Means of Grace, and that the Spirit of Christ inspires you, and rules your Heart. Consider what a melancholy Thing it is for you to obferve in others, that after frequent Communions and renew'd Vows, there is no visible Amendment in them, but they are still as carnally minded, and as much under the Dominion of Sin, as they were at first. Consider, That by your Unfruitfulness, you frustrate the Grace of God, you do what in you lies to bring his Sacraments into Contempt; you give Occasion to the Enemies of Christ to blaspheme his holy Name, and speak Evil of the Mystery of Redemption; and to prefer Jews, Turks, and Infidels before Christians, as is too commonly, and I hope unjustly done. Instead of reconciling God, you incense him against you, by breaking the Covenant you made with him, taking part with his Enemies which you have renounced, and so proving a Spiritual Traytor and Rebel. You wound your felf, that is, your own Conscience, which can have no Peace while the most facred and religious Vows are broken.

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broken. You are the strongest Evidence against your own Soul, that you did not worthily eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood, because you have no Life in you: you are not ingrafted in his Body, because you bring forth no Fruit. Remember all this, when you are affaulted by any Temptation; and then you cannot but esteem it as most pernicious, depriving you, if complyed with, of the Favour of God, the Peace of your Conscience, and the Hopes of Salvation. Then fure it will appear as dangerous to your Soul, as a Draught of deadly Poison to your Body, or a Thief in your House to your Money and Goods. Be not deceived, God is not mocked. He heard all your Vows, and observes what Care you take to pay them; which if it be none, he will appoint your Portion among Hypocrites, which cry, Lord, Lord, but do not the Things which he commands.

This Care of performing our Vows, must not last only for some few Days, and then be laid aside; it must constantly be kept up. For if we can be regular for some Time, this shews the Possibility of being so at any Time, and proves our subsequent Transgressions not to proceed from Infirmity, but Perversenels. Besides, the accustoming our selves to a Religious Course, must needs render it more easy to us; since 'tis difficult at first only from a contrary Habit. And therefore, if after you have reconciled your Mind to any firict Course, and have made it familiar to

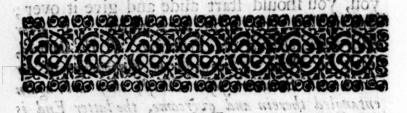
you,

you, you should start aside and give it over; this makes you most inexcusable. If after Men have escaped the Pollutions of the World, faith St. Peter , through the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter End is worse with them than the Beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the Way of Righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the Holy Commandment delivered unto them.

AND to the End our Vows may be ratified, and every Grace and Virtue confirm'd in us; We must take all Opportunities that are offer'd us, to receive this Holy Sacrament; this being not only agreeable to the Institution of our Lord, and the Practice of the Primitive Christians, but a certain Means of conveying Grace to us, a Means of strengthening and refreshing our Souls by the Body and Blood of Christ, as our Bodies are by the Bread and Wine. Let us but observe how often we must eat and drink for the Suste, nance of our natural Bodies, and then, if we have any true Concern for the Health of our Souls, we shall be frequent Communicants at the Table of our LORD.

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PRAYER.

RAYER ought ever to be look'd upon, as the most immediate and essential Part of Divine Worship, implying a Sense and Acknowledgment of all the excellent

Attributes of God. For, whenever we Pray to God, we do at the same Time believe his Omnipresence, as being near us wherever we are; his Omniscience, as knowing all our Wants: and his Omnipotence, as being able to supply them. Nay more, we believe he not only hears the Words of our Lips, but the secret Language of our inmost Thoughts, and sees not only our Necessities, but our Sins too. And therefore,

I N the First Place, we must dutifully recognize and adore the infinite Majesty of God, acknowledging him to be our Sovereign Lord and Judge, who is able both to save and to destroy, to reward and to punish every Man,

from

from the Highest to the Lowest, according to his Works. Thence we must proceed to render him propitious to us, by an humble and impartial Confession of our Sins; the Particulars whereof we are (in private) to fpecific, so far as we can recover the Memory of them; and where that is loft, to fay with holy David, who can tell how oft he offendeth? O. cleanse thou me from my secret Faults. In the Third Place, We make our humble Request for his merciful Forgiveness through the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ, and for the Grace of his Holy Spirit to assist us, in our Obedience for the Time to come, particularly in fuch Respects, wherein we have formerly experienc'd our Weakness and Infirmity. And then we descend to the Care of the Body, to ask those Things which be needful and convenient for us, in fuch Proportions as his Wisdom fees fit, and with fuch entire Resignation, as our Bleffed Lord hath taught us to profess in all the Concerns of this Life, Not mine, but thy Will be done. Fourthly, We are in our Prayers to intercede for all Orders and Degrees of Men, for those that are allied to us, either by the Bonds of natural or civil Obligation; for those who have in any Circumstance of Life been our Friends and Benefactors. Nay, even for those who have done us ill Turns; praying, as we have Christ upon the Cross for our Pattern, that our Heavenly Father would not lay fuch Sins to their Charge. Fifthly, We are to praise and bless God for all his Mercies, whether **spiritual**

fpiritual or temporal, to our felves, and those more immediately related to us, or to the Church and Nation whereof we are Members,

or yet more generally to all Mankind.

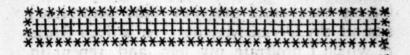
CONSIDERING the Frailness of our Nature, not only in being subject to Sin, but likewise to continual Dangers, Diseases, and fudden, unexpected Death; we need not many Words to excite us to Frequency of Prayer, and to as frequent Returns of Thanksgiving for that Divine Protection, which continually watches over us, and that incessant Current of Heavenly Bleffings which flow in upon us. Morning and Evening, are Seafons indispensably to be dedicated to this Act of Homage and Worship; it being absolutely necessary, that we should begin and end all our Works, with that Go D in whom we live, and move, and have our Being. Men eminent for Sanctity and Devotion, particularly David and Daniel, added the Noon-Day to their Morning and Evening Sacrifice of Prayer. And indeed from the many fublime Compositions of the former, we may conclude, that Frequency in this Duty, begets Fervency of Spirit and Decilight in it, no legislation is a legislation of shoots who have in any Circumstance of Life been

our Friends and Benefactors. May, even for those who have dorte us ill Turns; praying, as we have Christ upon the Crofs for our Par-

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PRAYERS

FOR

Several Occasions.

For the MORNING.



MOST Holy and Merciful Lord God, the Creator, Governor and Preferver of all Things both in Heaven and Earth; be pleafed graciously to look upon me thy

Servant, who come before thee to offer unfeigned Thanks and Praise for thy manifold Mercies, particularly for thy gracious Protection of me the Night past. And since thou hast brought me to the Light of another Day, keep and protect me in the same, I humbly beseech thee, by thy good Providence; watch over and defend me from Sin, and from all the Temptations to it. O Lord, who dwellest in the Heavens, yet humblest thy self to regard the Children of Men, Thou hast been graciously pleased to reveal thy Will to me in the Gospel of thy dear Son, who hath brought Life and Immortality to Light. For whose Merits and Mediation

reduction alone, I numbly implois thy Pardon for my many and grievous Sins committed against thy Divine Majesty. In a deep Sense of which I prostrate my self, and repent in Dust and Ashes for having offended so glorious and good a God. I befeech thee, give me Grace to spend the Remainder of my Days in a righteous, fober, and godly Course of Life. Enable me to keep a continual Watch against the Assaults of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, and to make daily Proficiency in every good and virtuous Way. In all the Affairs of this uncertain Life, let me evermore depend upon thy fatherly Care and Providence, having a greater Regard to thy Glory, than to my own worldly Interest. O God, inlighten the dark Corners of the Earth with the bright Beams of thy Holy Gospel. Influence the Hearts of all Kings and Princes, especially His whom thou hast set over us, with the Wisdom which is from above, that they may before all Things feek thy Honour and Glory: Endue all our Spiritual Pastors with the right Understanding of thy holy Word, and Grace to live agreeably to the same, that we may both by their Doctrine and Example be guided in the Paths of true Religion and Virtue. And to all subordinate Magistrates give thy heavenly Grace, that they may be a Terror to Evil-doers, and a Praise to those that do well. And, O, thou Father of Mercies! who hearest the Sighs and Groans of the Afflicted, Comfort and fuccour all those who are diffressed in Mind, Body, or Estate.

Estate. Lift up the Light of thy Countenance upon them, sanctifie thy Corrections to the Welfare of their Souls, and give them a happy Issue out of all their Assistions. Vouchfase the Continuance of thy Favour towards me thy unworthy Servant, and to all my Relations, Friends and Benefactors. Bless my Enemies with the Grace of Repentance and Remission of their Sins. Fill me with such a Sense of thy undeserved Goodness, that I may be more ready to do good to those who are in Misery, and by a sober and moderate Use of thy Blessings, be prepared to bear any worse Condition (if thou shalt see fit to order it) with a patient and contented Spirit.

AND now, O Lord, accept I befeech thee, of my humble and hearty Thanks for all the Instances of thy Goodness and loving Kindness, from the Day of my Birth, to this prefent Moment. For my Creation, Preservation, and all the Bleffings of this Life. But above all, I laud and magnifie thy glorious Name, for fending the Son of thy Love to be the Saviour and Redeemer of the World, and making me Partaker of the unspeakable Mercy of that Redemption. Give me Grace to walk worthy of this high and holy Calling, that fo at the End of my Days I may be number'd with thy Saints in Glory Everlafting, through his Merits who fitteth at thy Righthand to make Intercession for me. In whose most prevailing Words I sum up all my Wants:

OUR Father, &c.

APRAYER for the EVENING.

Most Bleffed Lord, Father of Mercies, and God of all Comfort, mercifully incline thine Ear to the Prayers which I thy unworthy Servant am about to offer up. I give thee most humble and hearty Thanks for all thy Goodness and Loving-kindness to me and to all Men. Thou art the Maker and Preferver of all Things, on whom all Creatures depend for Life and Breath, and whatever they enjoy. Day by Day we have fresh Instances of thy Fatherly Goodness to us. And though we have been Apostates, and fell from thee, yet thou hast been pleased, of thy own free Grace and Mercy, to give us thine own Son from Heaven, to advance us above an Earthly Paradife, even to thine own Presence in thy glorious Kingdom. What are we, wretched Sinners, O merciful Lord! that thou shouldest condescend to manifest such infinite Compassions towards us! But thou art good to all, and thy tender Mercies are over all thy Works. O then let me for ever praise and magnifie thy Holy Name! O lift up my Heart to those Things above, that my utmost Longings may be after that Kingdom which Christ hath opened to all Believers; that thy Service may be the main Business of my Life, and that it may be my Meat and Drink to do thy Will in every thing. Accept my Thanks for the Mercies of this Day, and A PRAYER

my hearty Repentance for whatever I have done amis. I humbly acknowledge, I have offended in Thought, Word, and Deed, by fecret and open Sins. Thou who fearchest the Heart, and trieft the Reins, knowest that mine Iniquities are more than I am able to express, and my Guilt heavier than I can bear. It is of thine infinite Mercy that I am not cast into outer Darkness, where there is Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth. Make me therefore a thankful Monument of thy Patience, and Forbearance, and Long-fuffering to finful Man. Let this thy Goodness lead me to Repentance and Newness of Life. Neither pray I for my felf alone, but for all Ranks and Conditions of Men; That every one may discharge their respective Duties so well, that we may all lead a peaceable and godly Life. Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive from me and all Men Bleffing, and Glory, and Honour; for thou art Great, and thy Praise above Heaven and Earth. Thou art Righteous in all thy Ways, and Holy in all thy Works: The Earth is thine, and the Fulness thereof; the World, and they that dwell therein. O Lord, how manifold are thy Works! in Wisdom hast thou made them all: the Earth is full of thy Riches. Into thy Hands 1 commend my felf this Night, my Soul and Body, this House and all that belong to it, with all my Friends and Relations. I repose my self in the Faith of thy watchful Providence, who givest thy Angels Charge

Charge over us. Grant that I may often think of that long Night of Death, when I shall be laid in my Grave, and sleep in the Dust; out of which I beseech thee mercifully to awake me, and raise me up with a joyful Resurrection; for his Merits, who died, and was buried, and rose again for us, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord: To whom with thee, O Father, and God the Holy Ghost, be all Honour and Glory World without End. Amen.

OUR Father, &c.

N. B. THOSE who pray in Families, may by changing I, me, and mine, into we, us, and ours, accommodate the fame Prayers to General Use.

A fborter PRAYER for the MORNING.

Lord our Heavenly Father, Almighty and Everlasting God, who hast safely brought me to the Beginning of this Day, defend me in the same with thy mighty Power; and grant that this Day I fall into no Sin, neither run into any kind of Danger; but that all my Doings may be order'd by thy Governance, to do always that which is righteous in thy Sight, through Jesus Christ our Lord; who hath taught us to call upon thee in that most excellent Form of Words:

OUR Father, &c.

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noingment For the EVENING. A. F.

GOD from whom all Holy Defires, all good Counsels, and all just Works do proceed, give unto me thy Servant, that Peace which the World cannot give; that both my Heart may be set to obey thy Commandments, and also that by thee I being defended from the Fear of my Enemies, may pass my Time in Rest and Quietness. Lighten my Darkness, I beseech thee, O Lord! and by thy great Mercy defend me from all Perils and Dangers of this Night, for the Love of thy only Son our Saviour Jesus Christ: In whose Name and Words, I beg Leave farther to call upon thee:

OUR Father, &c.

For SUNDAY Morning.

O Lord, Give unto the Minister of thy Word a Door of Utterance, that he may effectually publish the great Mysteries of the Gospel, and speak Words of Health and Salvation to my Soul. Do thou banish out of my Mind all worldly and wandring Thoughts, Give me Attention to hearken, and Understanding to conceive aright, and Memory to retain, and Grace to practise what I hear; that so thy Word may be to me a Savour of Life unto Life, and not of Death unto Death. Grant this for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord; in whose Name and Words, I farther pray: OUR Father, &c.

A PRAYER before the Holy Communion.

NOST Gracious Father, thou invitest me, a vile Sinner, unworthy of the least of thy Mercies, to a Spiritual Banquet, a Feast of Divine Love. O help me so to be prepared, that I may approach those venerable Mysteries with due Fear and Reverence, with profound Humility and ardent Devotion; with a Heart full of Faith and Love; fenfible of thy infinite Goodness in fending thy Son to die for me, and of his inexpressible Love and Condescension, in undertaking and accomplishing the Work of my Redemption; truly forry for my manifold Sins, and thoroughly refolv'd to withftand all future Temptations to them. And grant, Holy Father, that by this Sacrament, thy Grace may be confirm'd, and the Dominion of Sin deftroy'd in me; that I may ferve thee fincerely and acceptably all the Days of this mortal Life, and at the End of it, attain thy Everlasting Kingdom; through the Merits and Mediation of Him, whose Body and Blood I am now about to receive, thy Son Jesus Christ, &c.

After RECEIVING.

BLESSED be thy Name, O Lord, for admitting me to be a Guest at thy Table, who am not worthy to gather up the Crumbs under it. O give me a just Sense of thy unparallel'd Love and Favour towards me!

me! Thou haft vouchfafed me this frecial Opportunity to reflect upon the heinous Guilt of my Sins, and the Punishment which thy Iustice awards for the same. All Glory and Praise be given to thee, O Father, for accepting a Propitiation for me thy disobedient Servant; for exhibiting thy Grace and Love, and shewing me the Light of thy Countenance. I for ever love and adore thy Bleffed Son, my dear Saviour, for his meritorious Death and Passion, by which he hath satisfied thy Juffice, and made me one of thy adopted Children. Help me, O Lord, to abound more and more in Acts of devout Praise and filial Love, and to be fo diligent and fincere in the Performance of that reasonable Service thou requireft of me, that finally I may come to that Eternal Kingdom which thou haft promised by Christ our Lord.

In Time of SICKNESS,

Merciful and Gracious Lord, look down from Heaven, behold, visit and relieve me thy Servant. Look upon me with the Eyes of thy Mercy. Give me Comfort and fure Confidence in thee. Defend me from the Danger of the Enemy, and keep me in perpetual Peace and Safety. Hear me, Almighty and most Merciful God and Saviour! Extend thy accustomed Goodness to me thy Servant grieved with Sickness. Sanctific I befeech thee, this thy Fatherly Correction to

me, that the Sense of my Weakness may add Strength to my Faith, and Seriousness to my Repentance. And do thou be pleased to direct those who advise and prescribe the Means of my Restoration; that if it shall be thy good Pleasure to restore me to my former Health, I may lead the Residue of my Life in thy Fear and to thy Glory. Or else give me Grace so to take thy Visitation, that after this painful Life is ended, I may dwell with thee in Life Everlasting, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

After RECOVERY.

B Lessed be thy Name, O merciful God, for that thou hast consider'd my Trouble, and known my Soul in Adversity; relieving my Pain, and raising me up from the Bed of Sickness. Grant that I may never forget this signal Instance of Mercy, nor the Vows which I made when I was in Trouble; but chearfully and faithfully perform them, and give Thanks to thee, O my God, for ever, through Jesus Christ our Lord.



GRACES before and after Meat.

GRACE before Meat.



LESS, O Lord, we befeech thee, these thy Creatures to the Nourishment of our Bodies; pardon all our Sins, and endue our Souls with the Grace of thy Spirit, that

it may be our Meat and Drink to do thy Will, through Jefus Christ our Lord.

Or this,

GRANT we befeech thee, O Lord, that in the Strength of these thy Creatures, we may bring forth the Fruits of good Living, to the Honour and Praise of thy Name, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord.

(400 The SUM of the &c.

GRACE after Meat.

Thanks, for these thy good Gifts, and all other thy Blessings bestowed upon us. Grant that we may constantly dedicate our Souls and Bodies to thy Service, that at the End of our Days, we may attain everlasting Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

or this, A so

GOD's Holy Name be bleffed and praifed for these and all other his Benefits Spiritual and Temporal, through Jesus Christ our



GRACE

